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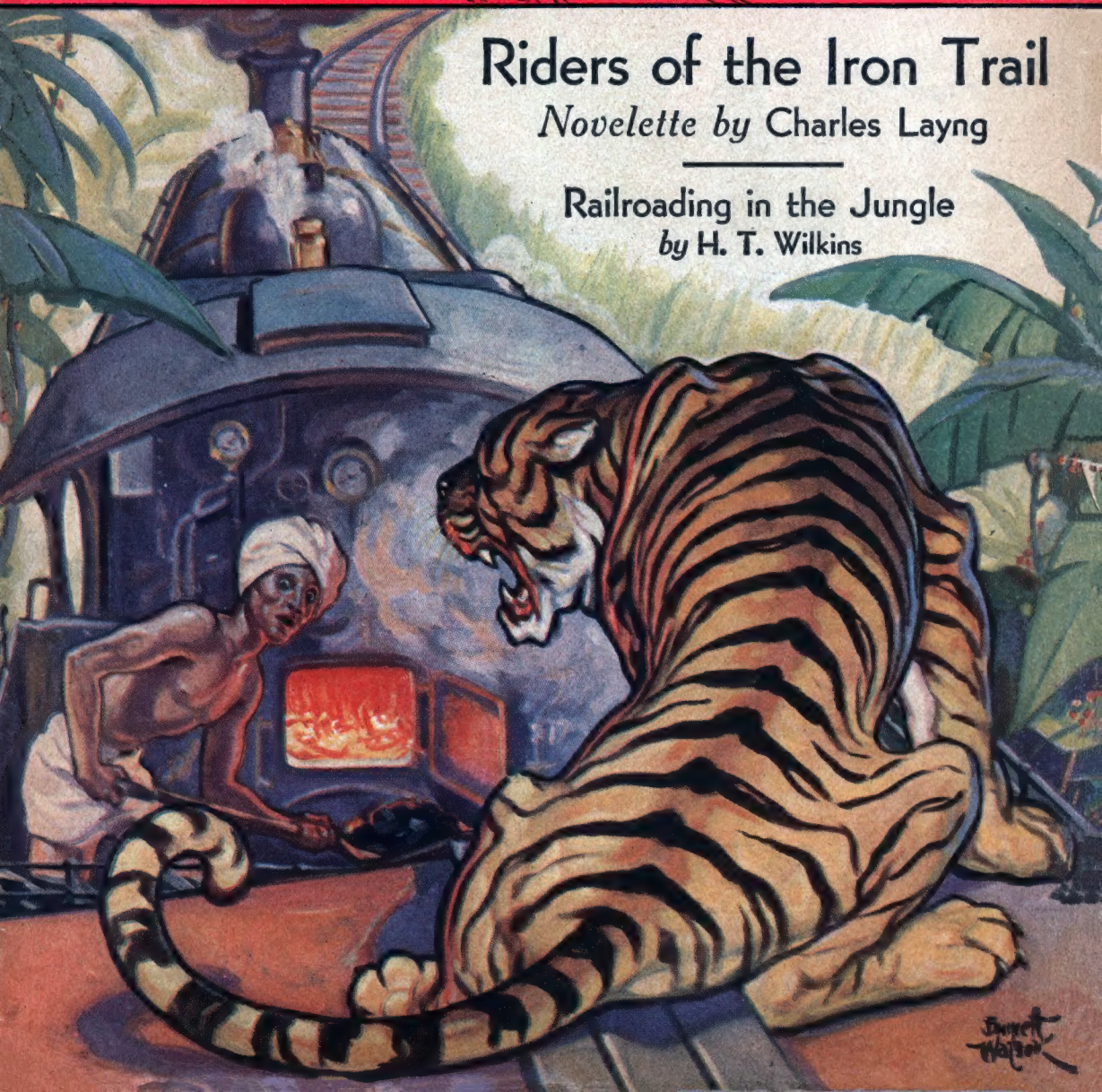

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Novelette by Charles Layng

Railroading in the Jungle
by H. T. Wilkins

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ALL-RAILROAD FICTION

Riders of the Iron Trail (Novelette).....Charles Layng 290
The Obliging Op.....Jacques Girouard 329
His Last Run.....Rufe Gable 332
Single Track.....R. A. Snyder 356
Mixed Orders (Novelette).....E. S. Dellinger 372

ILLUSTRATED FEATURES AND TRUE TALES

Railroading in the Jungle.....H. T. Wilkins 340
The Frog War.....E. J. Burns 353
Railroad Lingo..... 366
Casey in the Cab.....Drawn by Rob L. Lawrence 401
Locomotives of the Milwaukee Road..... 402
T. N. T. for Fuel.....O. Kuhler 405
My First Train Order.....Paul E. Hill 407
Three Narrow Escapes.....Leonard Puckett 408
Confessions of a Boomer Crook.....George Holmes 409
A Model Railroad Coach.....E. P. Alexander 415

SIX POPULAR DEPARTMENTS

By the Light of the Lantern..... 346
Railroad Rimes..... 371
Sunny Side of the Track..... 401
The Boomers' Corner..... 413
On the Spot..... 418
International Engine Picture Club..... 425

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RIDERS OF THE IRON TRAIL

Dave Morrows Loved the Railroad More Than His Wife — A Powerful Drama of Twenty Years Ago

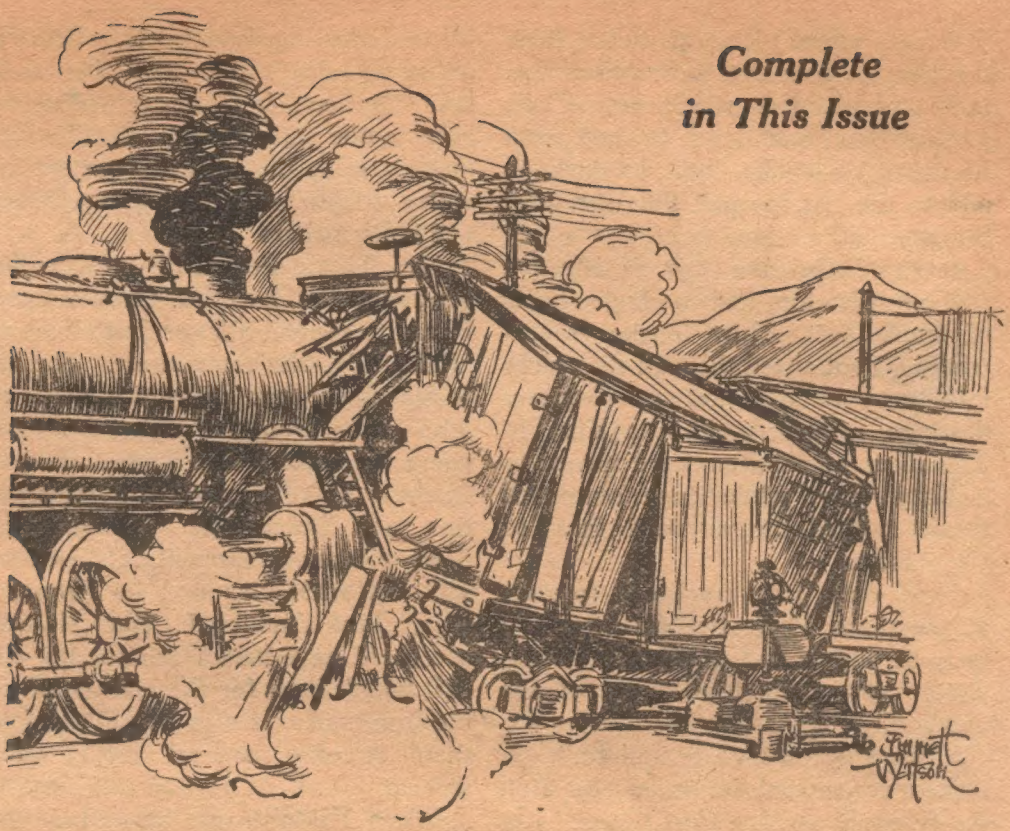
"Hurt, Kid?" Inquired the Road Foreman of Engines

By Charles Layng

"OLD as he is, Dave Morrows is the best damned hogger on this division."

The subject of these remarks shied hastily away from the group he had approached unobserved. So that decrepit crossing watchman considered him old, eh? Why, of all—true enough, in counting up, Dave found he was nearly seventy, but he didn't feel a day over fifty.

Jane Morrows stood at her gate on the hillside, watching her husband go down the hill, and awaiting a noise she hated. Presently she heard a small rumble, far down the valley. Then it increased. The lordly "Moonbeam," fastest of all fast trains, was coming to town at seventy miles an hour, and soon burst into view with a pennant of smoke streaming behind. It dove through the yards in a single



swoop, regally holding to the main line and kicking spitefully at the switches that might have thought to swerve its course.

A shower of sparks fanned from the wheels as the brakes snarled and bit, and No. 1 slid to a palpitating halt at the station. Its pause was only momentary, for no one save the engine crew ever got off the Moonbeam at Sommerton.

The engine was uncoupled and another backed on to the train. A new crew clambered into the cab. With a few preliminary tugs the locomotive settled into harness, whistles shrilled impatiently, and No. 1 was away.

Jane followed its passage with eyes and ears until the limited was swallowed by the encroaching hills. The dread and jealousy in her eyes was intensified, but there was a suggestion of pride, too, for her Dave was at the throttle of No. 1, the Moonbeam.

Sommerton was a railroad town. The din of the valley assailed Jane's ears. Beyond the roundhouse loomed the sooty bulk of the erecting shop, where locomotives were being submitted to major operations, and further beyond, the yards choked with cars.

Great hammerings and bangings reached her ears, and the hissing of tortured flames in blacksmiths' furnaces. A rhythmic clangor indicated the drop-hammer in action. Switchers whined querulously as they shuttled car into car with much bustling racket and little apparent effectiveness. Their air pumps, exhausts and whistles squealed, bellowed and piped unceasingly. Above everything there rose, now and again, the piercing, peremptory ringing of bells.

Stacks reared their ugly heads from the shops, from the locomotives and from the shanties which housed the yard offices. Each stack belched forth its quota of smoke, light or dark, to add to the gloomy pall that shrouded Sommerton.

It was before the days of effective fuel conservation, and the huge clouds of smoke left grimy touches everywhere. Soot sifted through the cracks into the unpainted houses. Frequent dustings availed nothing against it. The faces of children were turned to a dirty gray, while huge seams of grime marked the wrinkled faces of the oldsters.

Until dusk Jane continued to stare at the place where her man and the train he piloted had vanished. Then a sharp voice came to her out of the murk.

"No. 1 was a bit late tonight."

Jane recognized the vague shape on the sidewalk as Mrs. Carl Lepps.

"Yes," she replied, "but my Dave will make up the time before he gets to Hightower."

There was a certain condescension in her voice, for Carl Lepps was only a freight engineer and could hardly rank with the driver of the Moonbeam.

Like everything else in Sommerton, society was governed by the all-enveloping railroad. The wives of passenger engineers were in the front rank—unless one chose to include the wives of the local officials, who were, more or less, a race apart, spending as little time in Sommerton as they could.

The shop people, with their swarms of children, really didn't count. With a few exceptions, they were pariahs to the hill society, although Jane was quite friendly with Mrs. Louis Cartney, wife of the roundhouse foreman. But then, Mr. Cartney was practically in the operating department. Besides, in her position, Jane felt she could take the lead in showing tolerance, even to the shop people. As she frequently said, the unfortunates in the valley couldn't help being machinists and boilermakers.

Mrs. Lepps seemed disposed to linger for a chat, but Mrs. Morrows preferred to re-read a letter from her son Hildreth, so she went inside. She rejoiced again that Hildy was away at school, far from the railroad atmosphere she hated. The woman tried to forget railroading, but in Sommerton this was impossible. Through the open window, railroading charged in, with its whistlings and its hammerings. Jane shuddered. She felt that she could have held Dave for herself, if it hadn't been for the fascination of the iron trail. It was worse, she felt, than running around with other women.

When Hildreth was born, Jane determined that the railroad should never take him away from her. Almost from infancy, she had tried to instill a hate of it. Then, when he came of an age to be affected by the call of the rails, as were all the youths of Sommerton, she steeled her heart and sent him to a school in the East.

II

As Dave nursed No. 1 along, he thought again of the crossing watchman who had said he was the best engineer on the division. Well, he considered, if he wasn't he should be, for there was iron in his blood. He came of a family of railroaders as old as the L. & S. The combination of the L. & S. and the Morrows was unbeatable.

Dave's two brothers had left the L. & S. There was one consolation,

though; they upheld the family tradition by being railroaders, even if on other and inferior pikes. Only one member of the Morrows family had failed; his sister had married a hardware merchant and moved to another town. Dave supposed that she was raising her children to be hardware clerks, and he was thankful they did not bear the name of Morrows.

Charles Layng, Author of "Riders of the Iron Trail," Has Worked in the Mechanical or Operating Departments of the Southern, P. R. R., Clinchfield, C. P., Midland Valley and C. & N. W.

Since fast trains had made their first trip — which meant practically ever since the L. & S. was built—there had always been a Morrows in the cab of the Moonbeam out of Sommerton.

Dave's grandfather had come to town when it was only a construction camp. From swinging a pick to carve out the right-of-way through the mountains, he went to swinging a shovel in the locomotive cab, and soon graduated as a full-fledged puller of throttles. He ran the first Moonbeam into Sommerton, and continued on the train until old age forced him to give way to his son.

Dave's father had been firing the Moonbeam for years, and was transferred to the right hand side of the cab upon the retirement of the first Morrows.

In due course, Dave took up the shovel and fired the Moonbeam, with his father at the throttle. Since seniority rules were becoming somewhat more rigid by this time, Dave was compelled to endure a period of exile, driving freights and local passenger trains. But when his father died quietly in bed, after years and years of running the Moonbeam, Dave had acquired sufficient seniority to bid in the job and take his father's place.

Three Morrows generations on the Moonbeam, and now, happily, the fourth generation was nearly ready to carry on. Hildy should really have started his railroad career a few years ago, except that Jane had silly notions about education.

A brief station stop at Holt interrupted Dave's musing, but they were soon away. The hoghead had long since made up the time —it had only been a few minutes anyway—and they were drifting along easily again.

As he thought of his son, Hildreth, Dave saw no reason why the Morrows dynasty should not continue on the Moonbeam forever. He had heard somewhere that the line of Japanese emperors was unbroken for 2,600 years.

The general manager—yes, even the president—knew Dave and the Morrows family history. Dave was sure Hildreth would come along fast, once he started firing. He himself figured on another ten years; his father before him had been eighty-four before he

finally had to let go of the throttle. By that time Hildreth would be an old hand—maybe even on the right side of the cab—and with a son of his own coming along to take over after him.

Other engineers wanted their sons to be trainmasters or superintendents, but not Dave. He felt that driving the Moonbeam was sufficient honor for the Morrows; it was their destiny.

"The Moonbeam and the Morrows," he often murmured. Why, the very words linked themselves together in a sort of refrain.

As they were approaching Hightower, the end of his run, Dave yawned and stretched luxuriously, and filled one last pipe. He was never so truly at peace as after he had put down his seat pad on the right hand side of the cab. The seat pad was cracked in spots, and the stuffing stuck out in more than one place, but it was almost as old in the service as Dave himself, and he would sit on no other.

Dave's lay-over periods at home were short, hardly ever more than twenty-four hours. He was comparatively happy there, but, even so, before he went out again on his run, his eyes began to hunger for the signal lights and his fingers to itch for the throttle and the reverse lever. Family life soon became tepid, after the roaring surge of the road. A little sleep, an hour or two with his wife and son, and the rest of the time eating up the miles on the Moonbeam—this was all that Dave asked of life.

He loved his wife and son, but he loved the railroad still more, and the center of his affections was the Moonbeam. To have it late infuriated him and inspired him to incredible deeds. Many of his firemen had descended white-faced from the cab at the end of certain runs, to tell of mad rides in the wildly swaying cab, when Dave was making up time.

Still, Dave was a careful engineer. The safety of passengers was a fetish with him.

The L. & S. wound its way through mountains, and the track was full of grades and curves. It was not built for such speed as Dave called out of the locomotives when the Moonbeam was late, but Dave never thought of an accident. He calculated his chances carefully, and had complete confidence in his own ability, besides an uncanny feel for bad track, which had more than once stood him in good stead.

No Morrows had ever been in a serious smashup on the L. & S. Dave had seen plenty of them, but not since taking over the Moonbeam. In his freight running days, cars in his trains had been derailed many times, for car inspection was not then at its present standard, nor car construction either. Frequently a buggy rocked itself off the rails, or developed a sharp flange on one of its wheels that sooner or later split a switch.

Once, crossing the high trestle at Winford, the third car back of the engine had pitched over. By the time Dave could bring the locomotive to a stop, eight more cars had followed. In the drop of about two hundred feet, their couplings came loose, and the cars scattered, burying themselves in the churned muck of the creek bed at the bottom. They never did find all of the cars.

III

DAVE always figured he had made a mistake in picking a wife who was not of a railroad family, even though he was fond of Jane. He had married in middle age, and it's doubtful if he would have mated at all except to con-

tinue the Morrows family on the Moonbeam.

A railroad woman, he thought, wouldn't have made such a fuss about his comings and goings on his runs as Jane did. Why, he had even seen her crying when he was only going to be away a few days! Her attitude was puzzling. It never occurred to him that, in her jealousy, Mrs. Morrows hated the iron road.

But the hoghead was glad he did not have a woman like Mrs. Edward Cochran. Ed was never troubled with embarrassing greetings or farewells from his wife. She hardly waited until Ed had started on his run before receiving that nasty dude, the third-trick dispatcher. Everybody in town knew about it—that is, everybody except Ed.

One day Dave spoke to Carl Lepps on the subject of wives.

"Does your woman act up every time you go out on a run?" he asked.

"She oughtn't to," Carl grumbled. "It's her bread an' butter."

"Sure, but Jane is funny, and I was figuring maybe all women are."

"Well, my wife used to, Dave, when we was first married, but no more."

"Hell, Carl, that's different. Jane and I have been married a long time now, but she still raises a big fuss. It bothers me."

Lepps considered a moment.

"My Ada tells me that Jane says she ain't gonna let Hildreth be a railroader."

"Don't you believe it!" Dave retorted quickly. "He's gonna follow right along with the rest of the Morrows. Jane knows that as well as I do. Why the hell wouldn't she want Hildy to be a rail?"

"Well, Ada tells me that Jane doesn't like the railroad."

For a moment it seemed that Dave would hit Carl. Then he considered that Carl was a freight engineer and likely to make some such dumb reply. But if the women were talking that way, Dave 'd have to put a stop to it.

Leaving Carl, Dave climbed the hill in unaccustomed haste, and his greeting to Mrs. Morrows was absent-minded. He waited until after supper before beginning.

"Jane," he said, "it's time Hildreth was coming back here to take a job firing."

"Oh, but Dave," Jane replied in a panic, "he's doing so well with his schooling; we couldn't take him away now."

Hitherto, in his rather aimless efforts to have Hildreth start on his career, the hoghead hadn't noticed what effect this had on Jane. This time he was watching her closely, and there was no mistaking the look in her eyes.

"Is it true you don't like the railroad?"

"Dave, I want Hildreth to be a lawyer. I don't want him to be a railroader."

The husband ripped out an oath, something he seldom did at home. Jane began to cry hysterically. Dave stood it for a while, then clumped out into the kitchen, but the sounds of her "spell," as he termed it, followed him there, so he left the house.

Without conscious effort, he found himself down by the roundhouse, and entered. One of the 1800 class engines that he drove on the Moonbeam was standing over a pit. He clambered up to a seat on the right hand side of the cab, and stared unseeingly into the man-made, murky dusk, where workmen, with flaming torches, swarmed with gnome-like activity.

There he sat for hours, smoking his

pipe, and saying nothing in reply to occasional remarks addressed to him. He was thinking, thinking deeply, and his thoughts brought only an increasing rage.

At last he climbed back up the hill. The house was silent. Jane was sitting as he had left her, but she was sobbing no longer.

"Jane," he said, "this foolishness must stop. Hildreth is *not* going to be a lawyer. He's going into engine service, like his father before him, and his grandfather, and his great-grandfather before that."

"Yes, Dave," Jane assented dully.

IV

After the quarrel with his wife, Dave gave even less attention to his home. Jane had persuaded him to allow Hildreth to finish the school term; after that, Dave insisted, the boy must come back to Sommerton and get started on the railroad.

The hoghead was now spending practically all of his lay-over time at the roundhouse, except when he was not actually sleeping. He loved locomotives, for a big jack seemed to have a human entity, and passed hours with Lou Cartney, the roundhouse foreman, watching them being put in racing trim.

On the L. & S., the engines were chain-ganged. Dave would have liked an assigned engine, especially if—as was the practice on the R. & M.—it had the engineer's name painted on the right hand side of the cab, under the window. But chain-ganging had its merits, too, from Dave's point of view, since it enabled him to drive all of the 1800 class engines at one time or another.

Dave respected the big freight jacks, but reserved his love for the sleek 1800's. His favorite was the 1819. Most of the other engineers considered the 1819 a cranky nuisance, for she was by far the worst behaved of the lot, but Dave understood her every mood and just how to handle her.

And what feats he performed with the 1819 when the Moonbeam was late! Then the qualities for which he loved the engine came to the surface. Dave would have sworn that the temperamental jack knew to the minute how much time they had to make up, and how fast it was necessary to run to make that time.

After Knowlton Hill had been put behind them, Dave would shove the throttle over and the 1819 would become a fleet greyhound. The slow chugging of the upgrade was transformed into a liquid stream of exhausts from the stack, with no perceptible intervals between.

Whistlings for the crossings came in shrieks that echoed and reverberated among the hills in a wild triumphant song, a song that set Dave's heart to pounding exultantly. These periods were Dave's life, his love, his religion.

On the other hand, Hildreth Morrows despised Sommerton — although born and raised there—and under his mother's careful training, he had also grown to despise railroading. He had returned to Sommerton at his father's command, because there seemed nothing else to do, but he was in a rebellious mood.

Dave had no desire to precipitate a row by rushing things, but one thing was certain in his mind—Hildy must be a railroader; anything else was unthinkable.

The hoghead watched his son proudly, as Hildreth sat at the window gazing rather petulantly down into the valley. This boy of his was becom-

ing more and more like the sturdy Morrows, and less like the clerkly Hildreths of his mother's side.

He was a tall, broad-shouldered lad, just turning twenty. His biceps might be rather soft, but a few months of swinging the scoop in the cab would fix all that. One can't shovel several tons of coal a day and remain soft.

The clear eyes gave promise of being more than adequate to squint through fog and sleet at distant signal lights, while the strong, graceful fingers indicated the likelihood of the true Morrows' touch on the throttle.

What a runner this boy would make! It would be great fun training this youngster and watching him develop. The sooner Hildreth was started on his way to becoming an engine driver, the sooner the Moonbeam would be assured of another Morrows at the throttle, when Dave elected to give it over.

Of course, Jane must be given a little time to get used to the idea, what with her queer notions and all, but it wouldn't be long now.

Dave made a mental note to speak to Tom Russell, the superintendent, about a job for Hildreth, as soon as he could get in to see that busy official or meet him on the road. Tom could certainly fix it all right for a Morrows; yes, and give him a shove along after he had the job, too.

Jane also looked at Hildreth and marveled that this should be her son. He would go a long way, she thought, if only she could keep him away from the iron trail. She would see to it also that Hildreth did not pick a wife from the railroaders' families of Sommerton. Jane never gave a thought to the possibility that this might not be so undesirable after all. No, it simply could not happen to Hildreth; she must make her husband forget his stubborn ideas.

One morning, gazing toward the shops down in the valley and listening to their din, Hildreth exclaimed bitterly:

"Mother, I hate the railroad!"

Jane flushed with pleasure, but glanced into the kitchen, whither Dave had repaired for a cup of coffee before starting out on his run. She did not want him to be angered now. But apparently Dave had not heard, for he continued to sip his coffee from his saucer, undisturbed. Then he glanced at his watch and leaped to his feet.

"Jane," he yelled, "get me my grip and lunch box, or I'll be late."

As always, Jane accompanied him to the gate when he left. Time had grizzled Dave's hair, but it was plentiful, and some of it was still black. The obesity that comes to many hogheads when they give up the active profession of firing and take over the comparatively sedentary business of engine driving, had passed him by.

There was a bit of thickening about the waist line, if one observed closely. His bulky shoulders had become somewhat bulkier and a trifle rounded, but he was still a fine figure of a man, Jane thought, as she watched him disappear around the corner of the oilhouse. For the thousandth time, and more, she experienced the pang of giving her man up to the railroad.

V

Lou Cartney was in a terrible state when Dave arrived at the roundhouse. A recent shopmen's strike had left the road woefully short of available power—so short, indeed, that he had not a single locomotive available for use on the Moonbeam.

"Dave," he said, "you'll have to

take the engine that's bringin' No. 1 in an' run her through to Hightower. I ain't got a single jack left in the house."

This was long before extended engine runs became the commonplace that they are now.

"What in hell have you been doing with all the jacks around here?" Dave asked wrathfully. "Dumping them into the cinder pits? Sometimes I think you give them to the missus for baby buggies. You had a dozen or so in here last night."

Lou had an alibi ready.

"Yeah, hoghead, but that was last night, an' this is now. A helluva lot of things has happened since then. For one thing, up comes half a dozen trains of perishables from the South. Can they wait a few hours in the yard? They can't, not by a damn sight. Fatheads up North has got to have their grapefruit for breakfast in the mornin', an' I hope it squirts in their eye.

"'No freight engines to put on them,' says I.

"'What the devil,' says the traffic department to Tom Russell, an' him to me, 'ain't you got no passenger engines?'

"'Only a few,' says I.

"'Well, stick them few on the fruit blocks,' says they, 'an' get them to hell outa town. We want them freezers wheeled fast anyhow.'

"Did I ask them what to do about jacks for the passenger trains? I did, an' what did they say? Told me it was my funeral, an' wanted to know what a roundhouse was for anyhow, if not to supply engines. There's where them teakettles went that you're bellyachin' about. An' as for the traffic department—"

Lou's opinion of the traffic department need not be printed. Any railroader can supply the words and music.

"All right, alibi, all right," Dave grumbled. "Damned if I ever seen a roundhouse foreman who didn't have a good lie ready for all occasions. I expect I'll have to limp into Hightower on one side, with an engine that some damn fool has tore the insides out of. What engine's on No. 1, anyhow?"

"The 1819, your old favorite."

"Why didn't you tell me that before? Who's running her?"

"Bill Evans."

"Ow!" Dave wailed. "I might have known. Why, damn it, Lou, he's no more a hoghead than I'm an opera singer. That guy doesn't even know enough about firing to be trusted in a cab, let alone on the right hand side. Why the hell they ever made a driver outa him is beyond me. He must have a drag up at headquarters."

"Well, that's that, an' what are you gonna do about it?"

"God and the dispatcher only know. Get her from that louse Evans half an hour late, I expect, and then have to run the wheels out from under her to get No. 1 to Hightower on something like schedule. I'll tell you, Lou, this railroad's going to hell."

"Yeah, an' it has bin ever since I've worked for it—about forty years now—but it ain't never got there yet."

Dave and his fireman, Ralph Kinnear, walked grumpily down the tracks to the station. Ralph sat on a bench outside, thinking of unpleasant jobs of ashpan cleaning and of rebuilding a fire that the other tallowpot would probably let go all to pieces.

Dave went upstairs with Pat McCall, the fussy old conductor, who was as much a fixture on the Moonbeam as was Dave. Both gave vent to loud

"What the Hell Do You Think You're Doing—Switching Gons?" Dave Snorted as Evans Climbed Down from the Cab of the 1819

moans when they were told that No. 1 would be twenty minutes late into Sommerton.

"You lightning slingers better give me a break north of here," Dave warned. "I'll have the 1819, and I'll show you some running that'll make your eyes pop out, if Evans ain't whipped the heart outa my jack."

Dave returned to the platform and fretted and fumed until the Moonbeam finally pulled in, a full thirty minutes late, instead of twenty as at first reported. Evans made a characteristically rough stop that set the dishes in the diner to dancing.

As Evans climbed down, Dave snorted. "What the hell do you think you're doing—switching gons?"

"Look here now, Dave," the other engineer protested, "you know that's the worst damned jack on this pike. Stubborn as all hell, won't do anything right. I thought she'd die on me down by Green Mill. Damned old kettle oughta be on the scrap heap."

"Yeah?" Dave said shortly. "And let me tell you, there's a lotta hogheads I know that oughta be on the scrap heap, and one of 'em's named Evans."

There was no time now for further argument, so he yelled at Ralph:

"Get up there quick and see about that fire!"

Under his breath Ralph made a nasty crack about Morrows being old enough to go on the scrap heap, too, but fortunately nobody heard him.

Dave looked back along the train and noted there were fourteen cars, an unwieldy train with such a job of running to do. Hell, there was enough weight to bog down a freight jack, let alone the highly strung 1819!

Gloomily he stopped to consider the

situation, but only for an instant. Then, with oilcan poised, he made a hurried circuit of the engine. Dabbing here and squirting there, he growled to himself.

His conductor, watch in hand, was giving the highball, but Dave paid exactly no attention. Precious as every second was, he had to make sure that all was well with the 1819. A minute now might easily save ten minutes to a half an hour on the road. At the speed at which he intended to run, nothing could be left to chance.

Climbing into the cab, he walked over to the fireman's side.

"How's the fire?"

"Rotten!" Ralph replied. "That tallowpot Stephens couldn't even build a bonfire."

"Well, you get it in shape before we hit Knowlton Hill, or it'll be just too damned bad."

The fireboy retorted:

"All right, all right, I'm fixin' it."

Dave looked out the window. Conductor McCall was giving what was by now a frantic highball. No doubt the excitable Irishman was cursing volubly as well.

The eagle-eye responded with a derisive hoot of his whistle, shoved the throttle forward, and the Moonbeam moved out of Sommerton.

Up in the dispatcher's office the keys sputtered and spat. Earl Marsh, on the second trick, was trying to get slower trains out of the way of No. 1, with that running fool, Dave Morrows, at the throttle.

Operators at country stations in the hills took train orders and decided to listen in on this run. It would be worth while to hear what Morrows could do, with No. 1 thirty minutes late, and a damned tight schedule, too, as everybody agreed. The clicking record of his run would help to while away the small hours of the morning.

VI

The Moonbeam clattered out of the station, with the 1819 complaining in a surly, ill-tempered fashion. The engine apparently was not in her best mood. She almost seemed to be telling of mistreatment at the hands of Evans.

The fire, Dave discovered, despite Ralph's best efforts, was still terrible. It was ragged and uneven, and totally unfitted for an engine such as the 1819. Under Dave's supervision, the tallowpot sweated and shoveled and toiled.

"If this jack dies on me on Knowlton Hill," the throttle-jerker roared, "there'll be a fireboy missing on the L. & S."

Ralph did not deign to reply. There was too much to do, and breath was too valuable to waste on a crabbed old hoghead. He carried out Dave's advice, though, mumbling that he had sense enough to do that anyway.

Soon the fire began to approximate what Dave thought it should be. His temper, and with it the temper of the 1819, improved accordingly.

The lights on the signal masts winked and blinked, but continued to show a satisfying string of green. Dave was beginning to hum a little when, as the train approached the R. & M. crossing, the distant signal showed yellow for caution.

Then he swore, but he swore louder when the home signal of the interlocking plant came into view, with a blinking red eye blazing from its top. Dave seized the cord and whistled peremptorily for a clear board.

That light had no business showing a stop indication when the 1819 and the Moonbeam, not to mention Dave

Morrows, wanted to get by. But the light remained stubbornly red, and Dave brought the Moonbeam to an impatient and unwilling halt.

He peered into the gloom ahead.

"I'm a simple son of a—"

A long freight train was rumbling over the crossing — a freight, of all things, delaying the Moonbeam. Worse still, it was an R. & M. freight! Grudgingly Dave whistled out his flagman, realizing now that this would be no momentary halt.

"Why did the damn operator at the interlocking tower give this drag the right-of-way?" Dave mused.

There'd be hell to pay when it was reported, as it certainly would be, if Dave had anything to say about it. It just went to show what a rotten railroad the R. & M. really was, particularly as compared with the L. & S.

As a matter of fact, the R. & M. freight was one of its hottest of hot shots, with live stock for the morning market, and the R. & M. dispatcher, in his coop a hundred miles away, was, at the moment, sweating blood over it.

Dave didn't know this, and it wouldn't have made any difference if he had. To him the passenger train—especially the Moonbeam—was the only thing that counted. Such trains should be kept free from interruption. He had been running passenger for such a long time now that he'd forgotten the days, when, as a freight engineer, wearily trying to get a drag over the railroad, he had cursed passenger engineers as selfish hogs.

Dave fretted and fumed over the delay, until at length, the lights of the caboose flickered over the crossing and Dave put a heavy hand on the whistle. The 1819 was soon screaming loudly for the flagman to come in, and to make it snappy.

The five miles to Knowlton Hill were covered at a good rate of speed, and presently they were on the first sweeping curve that marked the beginning of the climb. The engine swayed alarmingly in rounding the curve. Ralph seemed to stick to the deck by a miracle only, as he ceaselessly fed coal into the maw of the firebox.

"Nice work, kid," Dave approved. "You're holding the needle right where I want it."

Ralph glared spitefully, but said nothing. The speed was materially less now, for the 1819 had a heavy train behind it, and the grade was not to be sneezed at, even for an engine running light. They swung around another curve. The engine leaned over perilously until it seemed that it could never right itself, then it resumed a momentary balance with a back-snapping jerk.

Dave yowled a string of unintelligible words, while Ralph swore fervently, for he had been tossed against the firebox, and it was hot.

Both of them were expressing an exceedingly low opinion of the ancestry of this particular roadmaster who knew so little about putting the proper amount of superelevation into curves. And, while they were about it, they included all roadmasters in their condemnation, not to mention supervisors, assistant engineers, and section foremen.

Ralph now leaned far out on his side. "Clear board," he chanted above the roar, and the Knowlton station building flashed by on the left. This was good, for a stop at Knowlton for a "31" order would have meant a hellish time starting the train on that grade.

Two miles more of this climb and they would be over the summit, ready

for some real running. The 1819 was laboring nobly under Dave's hand. The needle on the pressure gage was far from satisfactory when they reached the top, and the big engine was gasping a bit, but the fireboy remedied that at once. The worst of the run was now safely behind.

"It's just a mile from the south end of the Smith Mine passing track to the station at Sylvan, and Dave timed it in fifty-four seconds.

Two miles past Sylvan they entered the "race track," ten miles of straight track, on a slightly down grade. Here the 1819 showed the stuff of which she was made. There may have been faster ten miles run on railroads than those that Dave put behind him on the race track that night, but certainly never on the L. & S.

Back in his den at Sommerton, Earl Marsh's eyes widened with astonishment as the passing reports on No. 1 came clicking in from the country stations.

"Take a look at these O. S. reports, Sam," he called to the chief dispatcher. "Dave is certainly highballing tonight!"

The chief glanced at the train sheet and scratched his head.

"Some speed," he agreed, "and damned if he ain't got that cranky old jack, the 1819. Hope he manages to stay on the rails."

A fleeting streak of light was all that the night operator at Havens saw of the Moonbeam, although the roar of its passage shook the flimsy station building to its foundations. He flashed a passing report to Earl, who considered it almost incredulously, for Dave was really traveling now.

"We ought to be by Callville at 11.23," Dave screamed into his fireman's ear.

Ralph nodded and then shook his head to get the perspiration out of his eyes. This speed called for a powerful lot of coal and sweat. They were approaching Dwight. Dave took a hasty look at the train order board at the top of the station building, and shouted:

"Pick up a 19 order at Dwight."

Ralph hung up his scoop and scrambled over to the right hand side of the cab. He hooked his arm through the hand-hold, and leaned far out.

"Hey," he yelled at Dave, "slow down a little, can't you?"

The operator was standing on the platform, holding aloft the train order hoop. With the ease of long practice, Ralph speared it on his free arm, disentangled the wad of colored tissue paper, and tossed the empty hoop back on the far end of the platform. The Moonbeam had barely slackened speed, and at once picked up again.

Ralph took the order to Dave, and together they read:

> No. 16, s-i-x-t-e-e-n, take siding for No. 1, o-n-e, at Callville.

Dave glanced at his watch. "Eddie must be on time tonight for a change," he commented.

As distance was eaten up, and the Moonbeam began to be somewhere nearly on time, Dave lost some of his intense, worried look. For the first time he filled his pipe, lit it, and leaned comfortably back in his seat.

Callville was eleven miles from Dwight, but it took almost no time at all to make the distance. The bridge players back in the third Pullman hadn't finished more than one deal before the thing was done. As the 1819 passed the yard limit board, Dave released two long and one short blasts and he heard a whistle in reply to his meeting point signal.

The passing track at Callville was at the left going north, and Ralph, peering ahead into the darkness, saw the headlight of No. 16 alongside the main line. Whether he glanced at the switch light dwarf signal to see if it were red or green, he never could remember.

"Highball!" he shouted to Dave.

A moment later 1819 hit the switch. There was a screech of wheel on rail, a sickening lurch, and the huge locomotive plunged wildly into the passing track. Some one, somehow, had probably failed to throw the switch!

Three figures hurled themselves violently from the deck of No. 16's engine, but Dave and Ralph had no such chance. They were with the 1819 when she buried herself into the other engine with a grinding roar. Dave's hands were still clutching the throttle when they dug him out of the mass of shattered steel.

VII

Even in the smash, the Morrows' luck held. Dave came out of it with nothing more serious than a badly twisted ankle. Ralph developed severe bruises and a chronic grouch. Both men were taken to the hospital at Leeton, along with a few passengers who had received a jolting.

The news of the collision arrived at Sommerton some time before it was known that the engine crew wasn't seriously hurt. A white-faced mother and son hurried to Leeton, convinced that their journey would be only to reclaim a body, and found a silent and morose Dave, sitting disconsolately in his bed. He dismissed their excitement lightly, told them he'd be home in a few days—as indeed he was—and returned to his brooding.

Nearly forty years a hoghead, with a spotless record, and then to have a thing like this happen to him—and on his seventieth birthday! It hadn't occurred to him before that it was his seventieth birthday, for—like all railroaders—birthdays, Sundays and holidays had long since become just days for him.

Of course, the accident wasn't his fault, but they might try to hang it on him for excessive speeding, although the train had been well under control. He distinctly remembered slackening up some little distance before reaching the passing track switch. No, they couldn't lay the blame on him. As soon as this damned ankle healed up, he'd show them that he could still take the Moonbeam to town on time.

Ralph Kinnear called over to Dave from an adjoining cot:

"How's the nerve?"

"What the hell you talking about?" the engineer responded.

"Oh, nothin', only I've heard tell that when an old-timer who's never had a crash before finally meets up with one, it's sometimes hard on his nerve."

"Why, you young—"

Forgetful of his ankle, Dave attempted to leap out of bed to teach this pup a lesson. A stab of pain caused him to reel back onto the bed, and he contented himself with glowering speechlessly at his fireman, whose perfunctory apology produced no response from the old hoghead.

The tallowpot's comment started a new line of thought for Dave. So the gang would think his nerve was broken, would they? Well, let them—until he could get back on the road! When the Moonbeam was behind time again, he'd show them some running.

Then came frightful memories of the moments before he had lapsed into

unconsciousness. Dave Morrows, the best damned hoghead on the division, began—for the first time in his life—to doubt his own ability, his own courage. Perhaps he was yellow after all, perhaps a crash did break a fellow's nerve.

For hours he stewed and fretted over this, and got exactly nowhere. Then, since he was an eminently sensible fellow, he shrugged his shoulders and rolled over to try to get some sleep. There wasn't any use worrying. If the crash had broken his nerve, he'd find out about it soon enough when he got on the road again; if it hadn't, it hadn't, and that was that.

Dave was sitting on his front porch at home, with his pipe going well, and his bum ankle carefully propped on the porch rail, when Tom Russell, the small, gray superintendent, came to see him.

"Hello, Dave, how are you?" the super greeted.

"Fine, Tom," was the answer. "Doctor says I'll be O. K. next week. I expect you better see the trainmaster about putting me back on One and Two. How about Friday night? That'd just about suit me."

Russell flushed and squirmed. It was no easy job, this business of having to break the heart of the fine old hoghead, the fastest runner who had ever pulled a throttle out of Sommerton.

Dave stared into space, clutched by an icy fear. The accident investigation had cleared him of all responsibility, but he broke into a cold sweat.

"What about it, Tom?" he asked calmly. "Do you think Friday will be all right?"

"No, Dave, I'm sorry." Tom's voice, too, was steady. "I'm terribly sorry, but it won't."

"Well, when then?"

Tom hesitated an agonizing moment. "You know, Dave," he said at last, "they established a pension bureau up at headquarters a few months ago."

Dave reeled in his seat. His worst fears were about to be realized.

"Yes, I heard," he barely mumbled. "What of it?"

"The president just issued telegraphic instructions that all men over seventy be pensioned, and, Dave—" Tom's voice broke, "I'm afraid—that means—*you're through!*"

A flood of angry protest welled up in Dave. Then he saw the stricken look on the superintendent's face, and he knew that if Tom could have done anything to avert this he would have. Grimly he checked his tongue and even managed a smile.

"Hell, Tom, don't feel so bad about it. I was fixing to retire in a month or two anyway, without any pension, and now I've got a pension; everything will be fine."

Tom looked up in gratified amazement. A lump came to the throat of each of them. They shook hands, and the super went down the hill toward his office, with a stumbling gait unlike his usual jaunty strut.

VIII

AFTER Tom had gone, the pipe dropped unnoticed from Dave's mouth and fell to the floor. Not to run again! He could not realize it. He flexed his hands—they would never hold another throttle! His eyes traveled down into the valley, and he could see the signal lights on their semaphores winking and blinking. Well, that was the only way he'd ever see them now.

And what a way to end a splendid career—with a crash! After forty

years, to crown all his fine driving with a collision, not his fault, to be sure, but on his record nonetheless.

Even after his ankle grew quite well, he avoided the railroad and his old companions as much as possible. Dave imagined he could see in their eyes a great pity for the fearless driver who had lost his nerve, and he couldn't stand it.

Mostly, Dave stayed at home, in company with his pipe, while his eyes were hungry and his hands were itching.

His eyes were haunted with a terrible hunger for the swiftly moving panorama of the rail, and his hands were afire for the cool, firm grip of the throttle. Nights were the worst, for most of his running had been done at night. He slept better in the daytime, with the ease of long habit, but when darkness came he was always wakeful and at his post on the front porch. Occasionally he would hear the whistle and the roar of the Moonbeam.

"That's Ed Cochran pulling her north," he would mutter, and strain his ears for the sound of the exhaust, long after the train had passed out of hearing. Then, through the night, he would go along with the Moonbeam.

Night after night he sat in his chair on the porch, where he could see the signal lights gleaming in the valley. Jane could hear him talking to himself. The railroad had given back to her the physical presence of her man, but his heart and his soul were still out there on the iron pike.

"Now we're going over the R. & M. crossing," he muttered. "For once that damn fool dispatcher didn't hold us up here. We've got a good start for Knowlton Hill. Hey, boy, didn't you ever sling a hunk of coal before? Get that needle up where it belongs. We're going to need steam, and lots of it, in a minute."

Dave could feel the engine swing and sway beneath him. His eyes searched the valley for the green gleam of a clear board, while his hands moved about in the dark, jiggling this and wiggling that, with swift, practiced and precise movements.

He looked about him for the steam gage. Yes, there it was, just over by the porch rail. Then his eyes would swing over to the top step, where the air gage was, and he would examine that narrowly. He'd need to know about his air when they started down the grade.

Suddenly he would mumble: "Hey, tallowpot, take a look at that station order board at Knowlton. It'd be just like them to stop us here in the middle of the hill, to give us some damn fool order."

But the mythical dispatcher was always an expert on his job, and there were never train orders for the hill—just a string of clear boards, always. Once over Knowlton Hill, the front-porch train would pick up speed, and Dave would watch the flickering, ghostly landmarks as they swept along.

They would pass Sylvan and Dwight in grand time, they would swing into the long curve that leads to the Callville passing track, and there the run of the engineless driver would end. For some time he would stare down into the valley where the railroad was. Then there would be the scratch of a match as Dave again sought the solace of his pipe.

Once, on one of these dream runs, he hadn't stopped in time. His train had swung around the curve, and, there, just by the bed of struggling pansies at the foot of the porch steps, he had seen the dwarf signal flickering

for one horrifying moment. Then the imagined lurch caused him to fall from his chair, and a tremendous fright gripped him—the fear of being afraid.

After that one time, Dave was more careful on his nightly front-porch runs. Never did they pass the beginning of the curve at Callville. Always, as they approached that spot, Dave strained his eyes for landmarks, to enable him to stop in time, and, always, he found them.

IX

ALTHOUGH he had been born in Sommerton, where practically every boy was seeped in railroading almost as soon as he left the cradle, Hildreth knew little or nothing about the iron trail. Jane had seen to that. The iron trail seemed to him an ugly, unsightly thing. It was on the morning of the duck hunt that he first discovered there might be another side to it.

Father and son looked remarkably alike as they set out together in the extremely early morning hours for the blinds, except that the lines in Dave's face, from peering through wind and weather at signal lights, were deeper than those in Hildreth's face.

It was only after much persuasion that Hildreth got his father to go along. As they passed the engine stalls, the boy stopped in amazement. It was still quite dark. Several locomotives were being groomed for their morning runs. Mechanics were climbing to and fro, while the flaming torches in their hands illuminated the sleek sides of the jacks and set them glistening.

The big engines seemed panting and eager to be about their business, and Hildreth felt a strange catch in his throat. Why, locomotives were beautiful. This couldn't be ugly, sprawling Sommerton. This was another world, an exciting world of glistening lights and velvet shadows.

He continued toward the yard office, with wandering eyes alert. The graveyard crew on the switcher was taking things easy. No "brass hat" had ever been known to be around at this early hour of the morning, so the switcher was standing still, while the crew enjoyed a quiet little nap.

The jack itself seemed somnolent, purring softly. The two Morrows approached it, closer than Hildreth had ever been to a locomotive before. While his father regarded him curiously, Hildreth touched the polished side-rods, and thrilled to the touch.

Then he looked down into the yard. The rails were gleaming green and red, where the lights of the dwarf signals were reflected on the dew. The headlight of the engine winked sleepily, lighting up the patient rows of box cars.

Hildreth glanced at his father and, for the first time, realized there might be some reason for Dave's consuming love of the railroad. The two said nothing to each other, but Hildreth noticed that his father entered into the duck shooting with more enthusiasm than he had showed for anything since leaving the Moonbeam. They came back with bulging bags.

The pension allotted Dave was by no means a fortune, and Hildreth's education so far had cost a lot of money. It seemed more than ever essential now that Hildreth should get a job, and that, in Sommerton, meant being a railroader.

With a sinking heart Mrs. Morrow saw Tom Russell coming up the hill one day. Tom talked to Dave Morrows alone for a while, and then called Hildreth in.

"Son," Dave said, "I suppose ma's told you how we're fixed. The railroad's been fine to me, but I still don't see any way out of it but for you to go to work."

"Yes, dad, of course," Hildreth answered. "That's what I've been expecting to do."

"Good!" his father continued. "Mr. Russell has a job for you, firing. You'll get a lucky break, too, for it looks like there's a lot of business coming, so you won't have to hang around on the extra board very long."

Hildreth winced. He had tried not to think of the inevitable, but here it was. Still, there was no way out of it—for the present, at least.

"All right," he said. "I'll take that job, Mr. Russell."

"Oh, God!" his mother moaned, but no one noticed her.

"The call boy'll roust you out when we need you, kid," the superintendent said, kindly, "and, in the meantime, you might take a lesson or two from your dad in the art of firing. I know from experience that he can beat a lot of sense into a fireman's head. He did it to me once, you know."

"Yes," the hoghead agreed, "and look what you turned out to be—a superintendent—sitting on his tail in an office. What I want my kid to do is to drive the Moonbeam."

"He will, Dave, don't worry. And the sooner that day comes, the better I'll be pleased—that is, if he's anything like his old man."

It wasn't many days before the call boy showed up, and Hildreth dressed for his first run, his fumbling fingers having difficulty with the buttons of his father's overalls.

"Come out and let's have a look at you," Dave roared from the porch. The veteran engineer was excited.

Hildreth, with his father's grip and lunch pail in his hand, came out to pass inspection. Dave beamed happily.

"You'll do, kid," he chuckled. "A little more dirt on the nose—a chaw of tobacco—and you'd look like an old rail."

He glanced at his watch.

"You'll have to go now son, and, believe me, I'm proud that this day's come. Good luck to you!"

Hildreth shook hands and started out, but his father called him back.

"Here, son, take my watch," he said. "It's the best watch on the whole railroad. Tom Russell and some of the trainmasters presented it to me. Look, it says here in the case: 'To David Morrows, engine driver, in recognition of meritorious service.' Yes, sir, 'meritorious service,' it says right here. That's the stuff to give 'em, son—meritorious service."

X

Superintendent Russell was at the yard office when Hildreth reported for his first run.

"You're in for a tough jaunt," he greeted. "I see you've drawn Carl Lepps as engineer. You couldn't have done worse. Carl's all right, and a fine fellow, but he has a heavy hand on the throttle, and plays hell with a fire. You'll get plenty of shoveling this time."

It wasn't entirely by chance that Hildreth had drawn Carl. None of the firemen liked to run with him, for his coal-eating propensities were well known. When they didn't feel particularly in the mood for hard work, they dodged him.

Hildreth was excited, and not a little afraid. He was trembling as he took his place on the deck of the lumbering freight engine and awkwardly

picked up the scoop. He had no conception as yet of what a heavy-handed engineer could do to an experienced fireman. But for all his nervousness, he got a thrill as they started.

At first it was about all he could do to keep his balance. Then the firebox door worried him. It was of the old chain type that demanded skill and timing in its opening and closing. Hildreth didn't know the railroad, and he would usually get the door open just before the jack swung around one of the numerous curves. The sway would send the door clanging shut, while his back was turned getting a scoopful of coal from the tender.

Automatic firedoors, automatic stokers and other such jewelry hadn't come into fashion in those days, and it was with a strong back and heaving shoulders that the trick was done.

Carl's constant calls for steam and still more steam occupied all of his attention. After half an hour, Hildreth felt he might pass out at any moment, but still he shoveled on. Arms, legs, back and shoulders were screaming protests to his brain against the unaccustomed usage, but he drove them on grimly.

The world became constricted to include only that mountainous pile of coal behind him and the blazing furnace in front. Each time he opened the fire door, a wave of heat sprang out at him. He had yet to learn how to stand so as to avoid most of this withering blast.

The down sizzled off his arms, hands began to blister inside his gloves, and his face became hot, drawn and painful. His left leg seemed to have been fried by a most inexpert cook, right through the protecting overalls, and every bend of his knee was an acute agony.

Hildreth sprayed himself with water from the hose, and took a few hasty gulps from the nozzle. That only made it worse. He felt boiled now, instead of merely scorched.

But always the fire needed attention; there was no time to stop and lick his wounds. That great red mouth would open and clamor for fuel. The young tallowpot was impelled to feed it frantically, lest it consume him.

As the cab heaved and swayed, Hildreth staggered about. Once he was flung against the hot metal, but he hardly noticed this burn among all the other burns. Often the door would leap tantalizingly sidewise, just as he flung a scoopful of coal at it. The lumps would miss the opening and go bouncing down on the deck, rendering his footing even more insecure.

He fell a time or two, and once nearly rolled off the deck in a wild grab to keep his scoop from going overboard, but doggedly he kept on, shoveling and shoveling and shoveling.

"Ugh!" he grunted.

Then came an increase in the din and heat. He looked out for the first time and discovered they were pounding through one of the numerous tunnels on the run. Since the locomotive stack had a clearance of only a few inches from the roof of the tunnel, the exhaust struck it with full force, so that smoke and gas rebounded into the cab.

Later, Hildreth learned to wet a hunk of waste and hold it to his mouth and nose while passing through the tunnels, but now he merely went on firing, though the smoke and gas set him reeling.

They burst forth into the open and Hildreth became violently ill. His stomach seemed determined to leave his body, along with its contents. But

he continued to shovel, even after the train stopped, as it presently did.

Carl shouted, without effect, and it was not until he went over and shook Hildreth that the lad heeded his engineer's command to take on water. Hildreth clambered painfully up the coal pile in the tender to the tank in the rear. He opened the lid of the tank well, and, after some difficulty, succeeded in getting the spout over it.

The well filled more quickly than he had expected, so he didn't shut off the flow soon enough. Instead, he stood stiffly, hardly conscious, hanging on to the spout and letting the water rush around his blistered feet.

"Hey, dimwit," roared a passing car inspector from the ground, "what the hell you trying to do? Drown me?"

Hildreth shut off the water and took a few deep breaths before sliding down the coal pile into the inferno again. The guard chain barked his shins as he went.

"Highball?" Carl inquired, after the passenger train for which they were waiting had shrilled by.

Hildreth leaned out shakily and looked back. An arm sticking out from the distant caboose was giving the signal.

"Highball," he croaked in reply, and they were off again.

The shoveling, shoveling, shoveling began again, for they had a heavy train. Superintendent Russell had a bug for tonnage, and he loaded his freights with all they could handle.

Almost automatically now, Hildreth bent and swayed, swung and pivoted. The blisters on his hands burst and became raw and bleeding sores under his gloves, perspiration nearly blinded him, his feet seemed completely parboiled now, but still he shoveled on.

Ages followed ages and eons followed eons, all taken up with shoveling, except for an occasional pause of a few minutes, with only time to collapse against the seatbox momentarily.

As they neared Oakwood, Carl squinted at the needle.

"That'll hold her until we get in," he announced at last. Hildreth didn't hear, but went on shoveling until Carl had called to him for the third time.

"You did a nice job, kid," Carl said. "Now get up there on the seat an' take it easy. You're all in."

Hildreth slumped down on the seat as they pulled into Oakwood yard. There seemed to be miles and miles of tracks stretching out to the horizon on all sides. They swelled and contracted menacingly, dancing and leering at him. The railroad was everywhere, and he was caught in the web of tracks. At each switch-point he saw a gaping firebox gleaming and glaring, clamoring for coal, more coal, and still more coal.

XI

Carl half led, half carried Hildreth over to the crews' bunk room. He had to undress the boy, who had lapsed into a stupor of fatigue intoxication and was beyond helping himself. At last Hildreth was in bed and off to a deadened sleep.

Some hours later—it seemed to the weary fireman just a few minutes—a call boy shook him into wakefulness and the realization of a thousand aches and pains. His back seemed to be made of poorly forged iron, and it refused to bend as he tried to pull on his socks. His fingers were blistered and swollen, and he fumbled with buttons interminably before getting them into buttonholes. He looked about with sleep-laden eyes and shuddered.

The bunk room was not notable for elegance, or even comfort. It was constantly occupied, and its unpleasant odor attested to this. Its tenants were principally tobacco chewers who were careless, and the floors, walls and even the cots were stained.

Built in the shadow of the roundhouse, it was dark and muggy with coal smoke, and the murk was increased by a dozen or two of the smelliest pipes in all Christendom. The din was terrific, what with escaping steam outside and the clumping of heavily shod firemen and engineers inside. Hildreth wondered how he had slept through such noise.

Two other young firemen, who were also going out on morning runs, hailed him and demanded his company at breakfast. No one remained a stranger long in the crew room, for all were members of the same clan—the clan of the engine cab. Train crews were rigidly excluded from this smelly sanctum, and slept in their cabooses.

Hildreth limped over to the lunchroom with his two new buddies, where the scalding liquid that passed for coffee was dished out by a long, skinny mountain girl. The coffee revived him somewhat, so did a big order of ham and eggs, fortified by a slab of vicious-looking pie.

"Who yuh firin' for today?" asked one of his companions, as they left the hashhouse.

"The board said I was with Amos Boyd," Hildreth replied. "What kind of engineer is he?"

"The best in the business, since yuhr old man stopped runnin'. Yuh'll notice a big difference."

Boyd was a much younger engineer than Carl Lepps. He was sauntering about his locomotive, oilcan in hand, when Hildreth put in an appearance.

"Glad to meet you," he said. "I fired for your father many a time."

Hildreth liked him at once, and they joked over their preparations. Hardly had Amos clambered up to his seat at the throttle than he began to sing "Casey Jones" in a most untuneful voice. His rendition was so terrible that Hildreth looked over in amusement.

"You'll get used to it," Boyd grinned. "I always sing when I'm running. Except for a lot of others, that's my one bad habit."

No sooner were they on their way than it was apparent to Hildreth that, for all Lepps's greater experience, Amos Boyd knew his job more thoroughly. He found time to correct Hildreth's painful efforts at firing. Hardly had the train pulled out of the yard than Boyd left the engine to shift for itself and came over to the left side. He looked into the firebox.

"Here, kid," he said kindly, "you're doing everything backwards. Gimme that scoop and let me show you."

Despite Hildreth's fears of a momentarily imminent collision, he could not but admire Amos's technique with the scoop. The engineer used it dextrously as a balance, at the same time sending the coal into the firebox in a swirl, so that it spread evenly to the farthest corners.

All the time he swayed easily with every sudden jerk of the cab, always in the right direction.

"Keep your fire even, don't be afraid to use your grate bar and you'll get somewhere," he said. "You were piling most of your coal in one place. You'd have to dump a whole tenderful in at once to keep up steam that way. Look here, see how I turn my wrists over to spray the coal to one

"Hey, Dimwit," Roared a Passing Car Inspector, "Are You Trying to Drown Me?"

side or the other. You gotta do that if you want an even fire."

"There seems to be more to firing than just a strong back," Hildreth observed.

"You're damned right there is," Amos replied. "Here, take the scoop and let's see how much you've learned."

Hildreth tried to follow instructions but only fumbled. Amos watched him amusedly.

"Oh, hell!" he sad at last. "Let me build you a real fire. You're improving a little, but you've got a long way to go yet. Get up in my seat and watch the signals while I do it."

"But—" Hildreth began.

"You can tell green from red, can't you?"

"Sure, but—"

"No buts. So long as you're not color blind, you can get up there and pretend you're a hoghead for a coupla miles. You'll get a real thrill out of it."

Hildreth climbed into the engineer's seat and peered out of the window. Behind him a long string of freight cars weaved and bobbed, as though determined to leave the track at the first opportunity. Hildreth was horrified to observe a brakeman nonchalantly

riding them high, jumping from one car to another as though he were on a concrete sidewalk.

Suddenly Hildreth hollered to the engineer:

"There's a yellow flag stuck in the embankment up ahead. What's that mean?"

"Slow-order. Men working on the track," Amos called back, without looking up from his shoveling.

"What must I do?"

"Slow her down and blow the whistle to give the trackmen a chance to get in the clear. Pull the throttle over a couple notches."

Hildreth touched the throttle gingerly. It took him a little time to find out how to release it from the notch on the quadrant that it was occupying, but finally it moved, and he pulled it back.

The train slowed as they approached the men. Hildreth imagined they were looking up at him with a sort of awe as at a superior being, and perhaps they were. An overwhelming sense of responsibility suddenly assailed him. Why, he was actually driving a train!

"All right," Amos yelled presently. "Open her up again."

Hildreth shoved the throttle into its original position and they picked up speed. He looked ahead, then back, in a slightly dazed fashion. A hay wagon, with three husky girls crowning the top of its load, came into view on the adjacent road. He grasped the throttle in what he believed to be the approved manner and leaned far out, to peer ahead importantly. He could have seen just as well through the front cab window, for it was a bright, clear day, but it would not have been nearly so impressive. The girls waved. In return he gave them a patronizing nod and smile.

"All right, handsome," Amos shouted in his ear. "Time to stop heartbreaking and begin shoveling. You've got a decent fire. Now keep it that way."

Hildreth had reason to thank Amos for his assistance before they got to Sommerton. Although the strain was nothing like it had been the day before, he was weary, stiff and sore when, at length, they pulled into Sommerton yard. This time, however, he had enough energy left to hop nimbly down from the cab. He came up the hill whistling, and burst in upon his father.

"Damned if you don't look like a rail now!" Dave said in admiration. "Dirt on your nose and everywhere else, too. How'd it go?"

"All right, dad," Hildreth replied. "Say, how long does it take to get to be a hoghead?"

Dave looked at him unbelievingly for a moment, then he smiled happily.

"Kid, I had my doubts about you. I thought your ma had maybe spoiled you. But you're a railroader all right; you've got the stuff in you."

XII

But Hildreth had no more opportunities to run an engine. As the months went by he found the eternal shoveling irksome.

They called him one day to fire the fast southbound manifest. This was a run that taxed a fireman. Next to the Moonbeam, it was the apple of the superintendent's eye. Hildreth observed with delight that Amos Boyd was to be his engineer.

"Boy," said Amos, as they climbed into the cab, "you'll have to fire as you never fired before. I'm going to show the old man something or go off in the ditch. Keep that needle up there where she belongs."

Then he frowned angrily, for Bill Cummings, the road foreman of engines, was clambering into the cab. Although it was well within the scope of Cummings's duty to ride freight trains, he seldom did, except when it was very important. Bill preferred the passenger trains with dining cars as more suitable for a man of his gigantic bulk and equally large appetite.

"Better let me take her to Oakwood, Amos," the big foreman said, pompously. "You know you're still kinda green, and Tom Russell will tear my hide off if we're late."

Amos chuckled.

"Listen to that now!" he said. "These old hogheads never give a new man credit for knowing anything. Why, I could run rings around you any day you ever saw in your fat life, Billy my boy, and you know it."

Then he continued seriously:

"Of course, Bill, if you want to take her over, she's yours, because you're the boss. But there's no use in your doing any work. Supposing, Bill, you take a nice, comfortable nap over there on Hildreth's seatbox. He won't be using it this run anyway, I can tell you that."

With a sigh of relief, Bill lifted his huge form into the fireman's seat, but didn't go to sleep. The man who could have slept in that cab that day simply hasn't been born. It took all Bill's efforts merely to hang on, once Amos opened her up, while a crude rendition of an ancient song filled the cab with discord.

Amos was running, and running like the devil. That always made him happy.

"Hey, wild man," Bill roared across, "the speed limit is forty miles an hour for freights."

"Speed limit, hell!" Amos yelled in reply. "There ain't no speed limit on this red-ball with Amos at the throttle. Besides, this ain't nothing. Just pin back your ears, big boy, and I'll show you some real running."

Hildreth had difficulty in keeping his feet. Nonetheless, he shoveled and shoveled, swinging his scoop in time to the rapid beat of Amos's song.

A succession of clear boards facilitated their progress. Somewhere in a cubby-hole a dispatcher was chewing the stem of his pipe nervously. The figures on the train sheet indicated the red-ball would be on time—unless!

The freight passed Kimberley, and both Amos in the cab and the dispatcher in the cubby-hole rejoiced, for now there was nothing to impede their progress all the way to Oakwood. Golly, the old man at headquarters up north would have cause to chuckle over this performance—unless!

XIII

In the Oakwood yard a switchman was hurrying to finish his trick and go home. He was a good switchman, but these were not normal times; he was tired and out of sorts. The new baby at his house, his ninth, had kept him awake for the better part of three nights now, and he was sleepy.

Quitting time came at last, and he started gratefully homeward. Arrived there, a disturbing thought knocked vaguely at the back of his brain. Had he set the brakes on that cut of cars on track five? For the life of him he couldn't remember, and the howls of his infant were no aid to his memory. Oh, well, he must have, he always did, and, besides, track five was a mile or more away, anyhow.

On track five a string of box cars stood inanimate. Then, slowly—so slowly as to have been imperceptible,

even if there had been anyone to see—they started rolling down the slight grade. There was a faint jingling of couplers as they inched along toward the main line!

Around the curve came a thundering and a roar. It was the red-ball heading into town at the end of a beautiful run, and Amos was wasting no time about it. The first of the string of box cars paid no attention, merely poking its nose out at the point where it had stopped, perilously close to the track that the red-ball was using.

Bill Cummings and Amos Boyd saw the cars at about the same time. The first Hildreth knew of anything wrong was when he heard an agonized screech from Bill: "Unload!"

He knew the meaning of that cry, yet he hesitated momentarily on the edge of the deck. The ground seemed at least four hundred feet beneath him, and boy, how it was flying by.

He took a hasty glance behind him and, over Bill's shoulder, he saw Amos tugging frantically at the throttle and the air valve. In a flash he noticed that Amos's lips were moving, and thought he heard a mad note or two of the familiar tune.

All this took Hildreth but a split second, but even that was too long for the road foreman. He wanted out, and he lurched into Hildreth's back, while both of them hurtled out into space.

Hildreth landed on his feet, but the ground promptly flew up and hit him hard, crumpling his outstretched arm and walloping him in the face. He rolled over and over, the cinders of the right-of-way grinding into his flesh.

There was a splintering, tearing sound, as of a giant ripping immense strips of paper, and, at an odd angle in his rolling, Hildreth saw the big freight jack tremble. He feared it would fall over and crush him as he rolled, but it merely shook itself and held to the main line. Deep scratches on the right hand side of the cab were its only injury.

Dazedly then, Hildreth tried to put his right hand to his head, but found his arm wouldn't work. Then he tried his left hand, which bumped his nose on the way. That organ had been in intimate contact with the cinders of the right-of-way, and resented the touch of his fingers most vigorously.

A few yards away, fat Bill Cummings was staggering to his feet. He looked ridiculous, Hildreth thought, because most of his pants were torn off. Bill ambled over sheepishly.

"Hurt, kid?" he asked.

Hildreth stood up, and immediately yelled, for he discovered that moving his arm was an extremely painful proposition.

"Don't know," he said, but his pale face and the grotesquely awkward position of his arm attracted Bill's attention.

"Busted arm, eh? Well, kid, you're lucky, and I'm luckier still. After the nose dive we took, we got off easy, although I won't be able to sit down for a month, after the way those cinders took seven acres of skin off my rear."

Amos had stopped the red-ball, of course, as soon as he could. When they got Hildreth into the caboose, he pulled out at once for the mile or two run into the main yard. The engineer was a bit white around the gills—for another inch or two would have made mincemeat out of him—but he had a cheery word of sympathy for Hildreth as they went to the company doctor.

"Yes, the arm is broken," the doctor said, "but it's a nice clean break,

and will heal as good as new in a month or so."

Hildreth went back on a passenger train to Sommerton, where a haggard, disheveled mother met him at the station. To his intense embarrassment, she threw her arms around him and sobbed hysterically.

"Oh, my boy!" she cried. "You don't know what agonies I've suffered for you."

As they were walking up the hill, she became quieter, and even smiled.

"But this is the last time," she said confidently, "for you're going to quit the railroad."

"How? Why?" Hildreth asked.

"Your uncle, Randy Ferguson, who's in the hardware business at Fallton, is opening a store in Sommerton, and he wants you to be his manager."

Hildreth did not react as joyfully as Mrs. Morrows had hoped, but he agreed finally that it was a wonderful opportunity, and not to be overlooked.

Jane thought she was going to have two patients on her hands when she told Dave about Hildreth's new job. The grizzled hoghead reeled as though he had been struck. He looked deep into his son's eyes.

"Is that right, Hildy?" he asked. "Do you really want to quit railroading?"

"Yes," the boy responded, avoiding his father's eyes.

Dave said no more. In fact, during the weeks that followed, while Hildreth's arm was knitting, he hardly spoke at all.

"Yellow!" he mumbled to himself.

XIV

Hildreth did not notify the L. & S. that he was quitting. Somehow or other he couldn't quite make up his mind to do it, when he saw the dumb pleading in his father's eyes. But at length his arm was quite well and the time was approaching for him to take over a new job. So, avoiding Dave's anguished eyes, he started down the hill.

Although neither had said a word, Dave knew what he was going to do—knew that, after all these years, the Morrows dynasty on the L. & S. was about to be broken—and for the first time he seemed old. Mechanically he filled and lit his pipe in a gesture of complete and utter defeat.

Ralph Kinnear, Dave's former fireman, met Hildreth as he was going through the shop grounds. Ralph was a driver now, and the change had gone to his head. Always a somewhat swell-headed pup, he had now grown almost insufferable. More than one rail around Sommerton was just about ready to take a crack at him.

"Hello," he called out, "I hear you've turned yellow an' haven't got the guts to fire any more."

Hildreth flushed, but made no reply.

"Well," continued Ralph, "I expected you'd show a yellow streak soon. I never did understand how your old man hung on so long before it showed up in him."

"What's that?" Hildreth demanded.

"I said your old man was yellow," the ex-fireman sneered.

Without a word Hildreth took off his coat. Ralph, who had hardly expected this, looked him over coolly. The kid was husky all right, but so was Ralph. What he didn't count on was Hildreth's cold fury.

The kid wasted no time, but rushed for Ralph, who countered the wild onslaught with a vicious swing. Had he been quicker, the scrap might have ended there, but Hildreth had time to

dodge. Even as it was, the blow landed on his cheekbone with a crunching power that sent him reeling.

Ralph tried to follow up his advantage at once—a wrong move, as it turned out. In his eagerness, he failed to observe the muddy footing, and went down with a thud, just as an audience began to gather. Word was going around that there was a scrap. The Irish shopmen turned out *en masse.*

As soon as Ralph fell, Hildreth flung himself upon him, and the sudden thudding avalanche of bone and muscle sent a startled *whoof* from Ralph's violently deflated lungs.

The engineer writhed and twisted in Hildreth's hold. Finally, by the exercise of sheer strength and agility, he squirmed away, and was on his feet in an instant. That Hildreth had taken full value from his temporary advantage was indicated by the great, livid marks on Ralph's face, and the bruised ribs throbbing painfully.

Back on the offensive, Ralph drew blood from tremendous blows. But this blood was as nothing in a moment. A short right landed flush on Ralph's nose, and Hildreth felt the bones give way beneath his fist. Blood poured forth and covered both fighters.

The Irish mechanics were screaming now, howling like a wolf pack, and thudding each other on the back. It wouldn't have taken much to start a dozen more fights.

Suddenly Ralph's foot went out in a vicious kick. A violent blow to the heart, delivered by Hildreth at the same time, lessened the force of the kick somewhat. Hildreth staggered back and dropped his arms. He shook his head, and his knees wobbled, but he kept his feet.

Ralph's feeling of triumph faded. Another rib-cracker met him as he rushed forward. Viciously he swung his foot again. Hildreth grabbed the flying foot with both hands and gave it a powerful twist that sent his foe hurtling to the ground.

The big fireman started forward. Then, seeing that the other fellow did not rise, Hildreth stood over Ralph a minute or two before pushing his way through the admiring crowd. He headed for the crew washroom, there to wash his wounds and make a vain attempt to look presentable.

After an hour or two he came up the hill, still very much the worse for wear. Dave was smoking a pipe on the front porch and betrayed no surprise at his son's appearance. He had been forewarned by Lou Cartney, who had seen and heard everything and rushed up to tell him about it.

"Well, son," he asked, "did you tell them that you were quitting the railroad?"

"No, dad," Hildreth growled, "not exactly, but I'm going to, the first chance I get."

XV

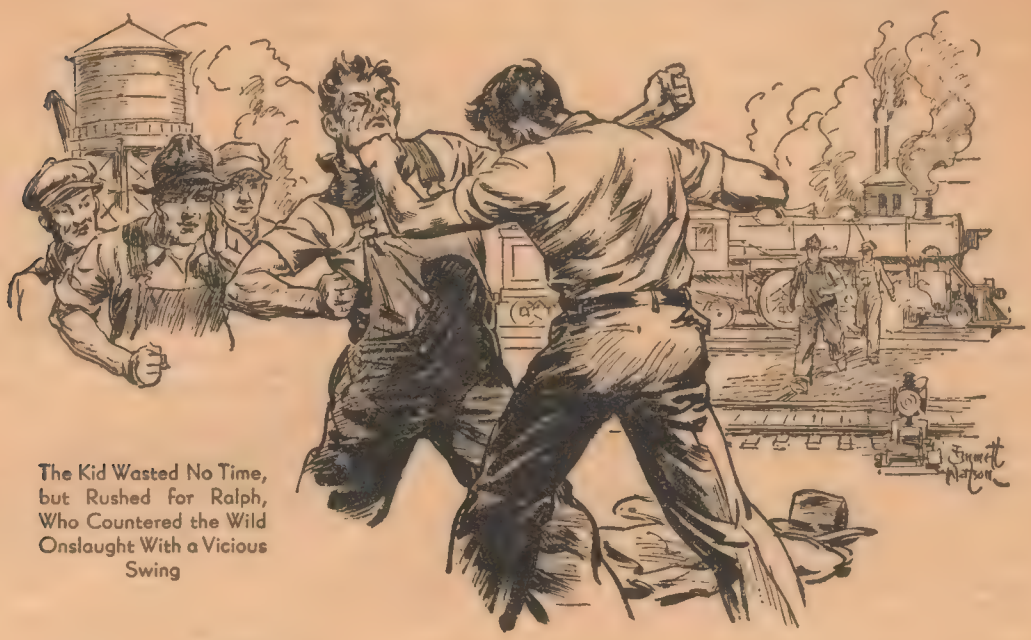
ALTHOUGH it was nearly midnight, Tom Russell sat in his huge chair at a battered desk. He was thinking deeply, and his thoughts were not pleasant.

A few months back, the owners of several other railroads had bought out the L. & S. From their offices in New York they pulled the strings, and unheard-of business began to shower upon the Sommerton Division, just as the coal was moving in its usual seasonal flood. Fleets of high class trains and long drags of slower freight began to clutter up the iron trail.

There had been no advance notice, no chance to prepare for the revised order of things, but Tom had tied into

it, as he had tied into many another emergency. Sleep became a thing to be caught on the fly, a few minutes at a time.

Under shrewd and competent hands, a division may be, and often is, operated far beyond its normal capacity. But if the furious pace is maintained long enough, the well-oiled machinery of operation shows signs of wear, the man-power peters out, the railroad becomes sluggish.



The Kid Wasted No Time, but Rushed for Ralph, Who Countered the Wild Onslaught With a Vicious Swing

Fiercely, and with every ounce of his brain and body, Tom fought the impending let-down. Plans were under way for double-tracking, for lengthening passing tracks, for buying more engines. All this would take months, and, in the meantime—what of the division?

Already he foresaw a dread embargo that would go over the wires and, following immediately after it, his resignation. Other superintendents might survive the disgrace of failure, but Tom couldn't.

"Hell, man," his supervisors had said, "the railroad's crammed tight now with cars from one end of it to the other. There just won't any more cars go on it. It ain't possible."

Perhaps it wasn't possible, but Tom had done it. The world was made up of an unending string of dull red cars that waited their turn to descend upon him from every sidetrack. Only the fact that his efforts were meeting with some success kept him at it, long after it had seemed that one small body could stand no more.

Another week like this and there might be a streak of daylight ahead, if he could only hang on, for the coal season would soon begin to taper off.

Then came the telegram. A trainload of silk, it appeared, would be delivered at the southern terminal in a few hours. The traffic department had promised to have this trainload given especially fast movement from the seaport to the silk mill in the East. The schedule called for running the train

over the Sommerton Division two hours faster than the Moonbeam's schedule—and that was tight enough, Lord knows.

A perfectly simple matter, apparently, in the eyes of the traffic department, to send such a train flying over a division that was already crowded to the brim with freight!

The super glared at the telegram, reading it over and over, hopelessly. For perhaps an hour he sat, trying to concentrate, trying to find some way out. All in vain! He had no locomotives capable of hauling the train at the required speed. Worse still, he had not a single engineer available who could be counted upon to make the run, with the railroad in its present shape.

Wait a minute, the 2691 was going south on a passenger train, and Amos Boyd was on her. She was the only engine not violently in need of shopping, although her condition wasn't anything to brag about.

Tom rushed upstairs to the dispatchers' office. The chief informed him sadly that the 2691 wouldn't do. Neither would Amos Boyd. The locomotive was not in the best of shape, and the man would have been out on the road considerably longer than the law allowed, unless he made a phenomenal run back to Sommerton.

Tom was staggered, but only for a moment. Suddenly he straightened up with a jerk.

"By golly!" he said aloud. "It might be done." The chief dispatcher brightened as he saw the superintendent's changed air. They had a lot of faith in Tom on the Sommerton Division.

"Thought up something?" he asked.

"Maybe, maybe. Who's handling the sheet for the second district tonight?"

"Earl Marsh."

"Good! Put him to work making the best tentative line-up he knows how for that blasted silk train north of here."

XVI

In the adjacent office, Earl Marsh pushed back his cracked green eye-shade wearily and rubbed a vague hand across his forehead. The figures on the train sheet before him were alternately dancing and swimming. He tried to shut out the clattering of telegraph instruments. Unfortunately, all of the other dispatchers knew the trick of intensifying the incoming sound by inserting empty tobacco tins as sound boards.

The chief dispatcher burst in on him. "Russell wants you to fix up a line-up for that silk train north of here. Need any help?"

"No, sir, I can manage."

This was a bombshell! Even in normal periods, a silk train is a dispatching nightmare, but tonight—

Earl yanked down his eye-shade and flung one leg across the arm of his chair. He darted a pencil rapidly here and there across the train sheet. Wrinkles came to his forehead as he studied, and studied fast.

At last he figured a meeting point for the silk train and No. 2 that would hardly delay the lordly Moonbeam at all. His hand was hardly still for a moment, as the re-arrangement of the entire picture of the railroad for that night took place under his deft touch.

Everything had to be torn apart and put together again, to find a few precious minutes here and there for the passage of the silk train. His earlier plans, wrenched from a tortured brain, had to be knocked into a cocked-hat and remade. Train order followed

train order, and gradually some semblance of order formed from chaos.

As the chief came over, Earl outlined the situation.

"Now, all we have to do is to get an engineer and a locomotive to make this schedule," he commented, "and I want to tell you, it'll take some running."

"Yeah," the chief agreed, "and that ain't all. We need a fireman, too—a damned good one, with lots of vim."

The chief got the superintendent on the phone and Tom came up at once. He looked and listened while the two dispatchers explained, and then he slapped Earl on the back approvingly.

"Kid, that's a splendid job of dispatching! If we can only hold to it—"

"Do you know a hoghead who can make that run?" the chief interrupted.

"Yep."

The chief gasped. "Who?"

"*Dave Morrows!*"

XVII

"DAVE MORROWS," the chief repeated. "You must be kidding, boss."

"I was never more serious in my life," answered the super.

"But Dave's been on the pension list for a couple of years, and besides, I've heard that his nerve's broken."

"Listen, Sam. Dave's old, and he has been off the road for a while, but I know that hoghead, and his nerve is all there. Anyway, it's our only chance, and, by golly, I'm going to take it."

"What about a locomotive and a fireman?"

"We'll have to use the 2691 straight on through. Lou Cartney just told me that there isn't another jack in the roundhouse that would help us. Dave's son can handle the firing. His arm is all healed up now."

The chief looked dubious and started to protest further. Then he thought better of it.

"Shall I have Dave called?" he asked.

"Never mind, I'll go up there myself. I want to see him, anyhow."

The Morrows' home was dark as Tom walked up the hill, but the light of a glowing pipe on the porch indicated that Dave was pursuing his usual nocturnal habit. The old man grunted in amazement as he recognized his late visitor, who wasted no time in getting to the point.

"Dave, do you still remember the railroad?"

"I know every inch of it, Tom. Haven't I sat here every night for months, going over it in my mind?"

"Do you think you could take a train over it, all the way to the northern terminal if you had to? Do you know that stretch north of Hightower?"

"Hell, boss, I don't have to think—I *know* I could. I've run trains over every inch of this damned division of yours, night and day. But, look here, Tom, I'm kinda touchy about being a worthless old hulk, so let's talk about something else."

"Supposing I were to ask you to drive a silk train through in faster time than anyone has ever run before, what would you say?"

Dave was afraid to trust his ears. It couldn't be, and yet there was Tom, his thin, worn face eager in the dim light.

"I'd say I could do it all right," Dave said slowly.

"Then wake up that husky son of yours, because I need a fireman, too. There'll be a silk train out of here in two or three hours, with Morrows, engineer, and Morrows, fireman. Come

on, wake up Hildreth! Let's get going to the roundhouse."

"You—you don't really mean this, Tom?"

"Of course I mean it, hoghead. Let's go."

Dave's mouth opened. His pipe dropped and scattered a shower of sparks unheeded. His aching, impossible dream had come true at last!

"Morrows, engineer, and Morrows, fireman! Damned if that won't look pretty on the train sheets again," he kept repeating over and over.

Then he gave a wild yell that woke not only Hildreth, for whom it was intended, but every one for a quarter of a mile around as well. His son came rushing out to the porch in his nightshirt.

"What's the trouble, dad?" he inquired, overlooking the superintendent in the darkness, until Tom spoke up.

"I've asked your dad to drive a silk train. He says he can do it, and I want you to fire for him. Hurry, I've got my car outside, waiting to take both of you to the roundhouse."

Hildreth hesitated. Dave's excited jabbering broke off short; he remembered that the boy had said he was no longer a railroader. He was a hardware merchant now, or soon would be.

Above an extremely black eye, the relic of his recent set-to with Ralph, a puzzled frown appeared. Then, abruptly, Hildreth turned and went inside.

"Hey, ma, where'd you put my overalls?" the two on the porch heard him asking, and they solemnly shook hands.

Without a word, Jane found the desired garments and hurried to the kitchen to prepare two lunches. Dave's excited voice could be heard all over the house. He was telling Tom gleefully that he still had his same old seat pad. There was an exultant ring in his voice that she had not heard in years. This was not the beaten, hopeless old fellow of an hour ago; this was a competent, confident driver of locomotives, a man among men.

As they were leaving, Jane hugged her son frantically, as though he were to be gone forever. Wordlessly she clung to him and then, at last, she let him go—to the railroad!

XVIII

Lou Cartney, his eyebrows lifted in surprise at the sight of Dave, met them as the car drew up in front of the roundhouse.

"The dispatchers' office has been tryin' to get you on the phone for ten minutes, Mr. Russell."

Tom hurried inside. A dozen questions from Lou brought gloating replies from Dave, whose eyes were gleaming and whose nostrils were widespread.

As soon as Tom came walking out of the office, Dave knew something was wrong. The superintendent's eyes were sunk deeper into his head, and the dark rings of sleeplessness around them seemed to have doubled in area. His hands were trembling, and he was muttering to himself.

"For Pete's sake, Lou," he begged, "haven't you got a single engine in the roundhouse?"

"No, sir, boss, none that could handle the silk train."

Tom moved his hands in a fluttering gesture of defeat, and his head drooped.

"What's the trouble?" Hildreth asked.

"Cummings is riding that silk train, and he wires me that the 2691 isn't steaming right. They don't know

what's the matter with her, but they think it's front end trouble. Can't tell definitely until she gets here."

"Can't it be fixed here?"

"Sure, but by the time we get the whole front end torn out to find out what the matter is, the silk train ought to be half way to Benton. It's no use. I'm through, I expect."

"Say, Tom," Dave interrupted eagerly, "I believe I could turn in a good run with one of them freight hogs. I did it once on the Moonbeam, years ago."

"Not a chance, Dave," was the gloomy response. "You might do it if they were in shape, but there isn't a good one in the lot. Every jack that's worth a damn is out on the railroad, pulling trains."

"Will any of them be back soon?"

"Not one, until tomorrow noon," said the roundhouse foreman. "I ain't never seen such a shortage of power."

"Couldn't we borrow one from the R. & M.?"

"Nope, we've borrowed every jack off'n them that they'll loan us. We're sunk, an' sunk right."

"That's right, Dave," Tom agreed, with a quaver in his voice. "Lou's said it. I'm licked."

"What the hell's happened?" Dave growled. "Can this be Tom Russell, the fightin'est little bantam that ever swung a scoop? Buck up, Tom, we've been in tighter places than this together, and we've always wormed out of them."

A clerk came running out and informed Tom that he was wanted on the phone again. Dave turned suddenly to Lou.

"Boy, this would be easy if I only had the 1819. Say, that reminds me, where in the hell is she?" he demanded.

"That cranky old jack is in the erectin' shop. We had her fixed up once after you smashed her, but she wasn't worth a damn, so we put her in white lead until a month or so back, when we had to take every old thing an' get it fixed to run."

"Say, you lunkhead, what the hell do you know about that engine? You used to say she was no good when she was the best damned jack on the whole division."

The old hoghead's eyes flashed and he clenched his fists. The return of the superintendent interrupted what might have developed into a first class argument. Tom was grinning wryly.

"Just been talking to the old man," he said, "and it's a wonder the wires didn't melt. I stalled him along, but it's no use. I know when I'm licked."

"You wouldn't be licked if I could get the 1819," Dave retorted.

Tom had a gleam of hope. "When's the 1819 due out of the erecting shop?"

"Dunno for sure," the roundhouse foreman replied. "When I came through there this evenin', they had her on the last pit. Oughta be out some time tomorrer, I expect. But you couldn't use that old hack anyhow, Mr. Russell. Might as well have nothin' at all."

"You can't talk like that about the 1819," Dave rumbled. "If you damned shop men haven't ruined her by resetting the valves all cock-eyed, I can take that engine and put your damned silk train into Benton just as fast as you want it there."

"You say she's on the last pit, Lou?" Tom asked impatiently.

"She was this evening."

"Well, then, by golly, she'll make the run if I have to put every shopman in Sommerton to work on her!" There

was fire in the superintendent's eyes as he added: "Pile in, boys; we're going down to the erecting shop."

XIX

THE night erecting shop foreman bore the noncommital name of Smith, but he was as Irish as the smoke of peat. They found him in an engine pit, swearing mightily.

"What'll ye be wantin' this time of the night?" he inquired.

"We want the 1819," said Tom.

"Well, ye can't have her until the mornin'."

"Why not?"

"For many an' various reasons. There she stands, look at her yerself."

The 1819 did, indeed, bear an undressed appearance. New lagging had just been applied, and the shreds of asbestos hung about everywhere. Much of the exterior piping was missing, and the whole front end was a gaping hole. She certainly did not look ready—nor possible to be made ready for many a long hour—but Tom was not easily deterred.

"What's she need?" he asked.

Smith scratched his head.

"Well, if it's a lecture ye want, Mr. Russell, ye shall have it. Her valves were set today, but she needs to have her steam an' water pipes tested. Then we'll have to close the smokebox an' put on the front-end nettin'. There's the devil's own slew of pipes an' fittin's to be connected, an' then she'll have to be fired up an' the pops set an' tested. After that we'll paint her an' give her a trial run. Then ye may have her an' welcome, the cranky old hog that she is."

"We've got to use this engine within three hours," Tom Russell asserted. "Less than that, if possible."

"Superintendent or no," Smith replied, "ye're talkin' through your damned hat. It can't be done."

The red of Smith's hair seemed to become redder, and his thick neck took on the color of a turkey's wattles. His smudged jaw, whereon the whiskers shone blue beneath the grime, set in a stubborn line. Tom looked at him speculatively.

"You like a fight, Smith, I've been led to believe."

The big foreman squared his shoulders. "Yes, sir, bein' an Irishman."

"Right. Now, then, Smith, we're up against the worst fight you ever heard of—a fight against time. We must have that engine within two or three hours, to take a silk train north. If you have to use every man in the shop on her, it'll be all right. Call out the day men if you want to, and I'll square it with the master mechanic. Can you do it?"

The son of Erin grinned.

"Well, now, Mr. Russell, when ye put it that way, it's different. By workin' an' fightin' like the cats of Kilkenny, only more so, an' with the help of God an' his saints, we may do it. But we can't paint her, nor yet give her a trial run."

"To hell with the paint and the trial run. What we want is the engine."

Smith spat upon his hands. He burst into a roar that could be heard throughout the shop, high above the clatter and the clamor. Men crawled out of pits, from engine boilers, from behind lathes and planers, and, like gnomes from Vulcan's forge, the greasy, sooty forms gathered around Smith.

"We're after gettin' the 1819 out in two hours," he announced. "Perkins, put yer gang on them steam an' water pipes. Hamilton, ye take the front end. McGuire, have yer pipefit-

Twenty Men Swarmed upon the Locomotive at Once in a Desperate Race Against Time

ters ready. Kelly, see that them pops is tested. An, ye lazy louts, work as ye never worked before, I'll be watchin' ye."

Twenty men swarmed upon the locomotive at once. Terrific hammerings and bangings began, as some disappeared into its insides, some went up into the cab, and others into the pit beneath.

Smith was here, there and everywhere, shouting orders in almost constantly. Whatever he had thought about getting the engine out before, there was no doubt now but that he intended to make good on his promise. Dave stood just out of the way, his eyes devouring every well-remembered detail of the 1819.

"There, men," he said, reverently, "is an engine! They don't build them like that any more."

"An' a damned good job they don't," Lou mumbled, as he left for the roundhouse.

"What sort of repairs has she been having?" Dave asked, after flinging a curse at the departing Lou.

"Class three," Tom replied.

"Hmm! That's pretty heavy work. There's no telling what them Turks has done to her machinery."

"You don't think she'll do then, after all?" Tom asked anxiously.

"Hell, yes, she'll have to do. I'm a little worried, that's all. If they've got her valves set right, we'll make it. If not—"

"Then, what?"

"Then, by Jiminy, I'll take her through anyhow! Man, that's the 1819—my engine! I'd rather have her in any shape than some other jack in the best of condition. She ain't never failed me yet, and she's not gonna fail this last time."

Messenger boys kept dashing in from the dispatchers' office, with tele-

grams for Tom, gloomy telegrams from Cummings, dropped from the silk train, and vicious goading messages from the old man at Benton.

"How's Amos doing?" Dave asked.

"Just limping along. The 2691 is still giving him plenty of trouble."

The minutes passed with terrible rapidity. Smith was driving his men at a furious pace. There was a fine edge to his Irish tongue, but, to the impatient watchers, it seemed that human beings had never moved so slowly since time began.

Another telegram came in presently. Tom's face brightened.

"The 2691 will probably never be any good any more," he said, "but that boy Amos is sure making time with her now, front end or no front end. Why, at this rate he'll be in here at about two fifteen."

"Fine!" answered Dave Morrows. "Amos is a good driver. He oughta be, I taught him myself."

Tom was still doubtful. "He hasn't got to make the schedule that you'll have north of here."

Dave flexed his fingers, itching for the throttle. "Leave that to me, boss. The 1819, the kid and me will make it—easy."

Smith approached, bathed in perspiration. He shook himself like a water spaniel.

"She'll be ready at two forty-five, Mr. Russell," he announced.

"Not good enough," grunted the super. "You'll have to shave a half an hour or more off that. We want her at the station at two fifteen."

"Then, by the saints of Heaven, ye shall have her!"

Smith climbed back onto the engine, and again his orders bellowed forth above the clankings.

The mechanics, already working desperately, took on a new vigor. They scuttled back and forth, their arms swung with the speed of a high-geared machine, the netting was lifted into place and fastened, and the front end door shut and bolted. The pipefitters followed upon the heels of the other workers, and, already, laborers were busy assembling materials for building a fire in her.

"Tell Lou to have a full tank of coal and water ready," Smith yelled down out of the cab window. "She'll be out in ten minutes."

"Great work!" Tom replied. "I'll ask Lou to have a hostler ready, too, to take her to the station. Hildreth, drive your father down there. I'll join you later."

Wild excitement was gripping Hildreth. Throughout the proceedings, he had followed along dazedly, but now there came to him a realization of the joy of battle.

XX

As Dave sat on the bench at the station that night, he was planning and scheming already. Clutching his frayed seat pad, he conned over, for the thousandth time, the remembered details of the 1819. Unless they had changed things in that cab, he could picture every inch of it as it was, down to the last bolt on the firebox door.

His thoughts turned to the line, and the whole railroad unrolled before his vision. He heard again the sounds that gave him a sense of location, the hollow rumble of the train over trestles, the reverberating roar in tunnels, the growling gasps on the upgrades, and the clanking couplers on the down.

Perhaps they had changed the location of a few semaphores, but what of that? He squinted down the yard. Yes, his eyes were still as good as they

ever were. He could see even the farthest dwarf signal plainly.

Suddenly he grasped his seat pad tighter and squirmed in excitement. He jumped to his feet as, down in the yard, he saw the reflection of an approaching headlight, gleaming on the rails, a headlight that must belong to the 2691.

Confirmation came soon, as a labored puffing reached his ears, which selected it unerringly from among all the other noises. Only a cracked valve spool could produce that sound. The approaching train whistled for the Fourth Street crossing, and Dave was certain. That was Amos Boyd's hand on the whistle, no mistake about that.

"There she is, kid!" Dave cried. "We're gonna save this whole damned railroad tonight."

Vainly as he strove to concentrate on the hardware business, Hildreth felt a thrill such as he'd never known before. His father was not the old man of a day ago. The dull eyes were now aglow, the powerful shoulders straightened and, as the hostler brought the 1819 along the tracks, something of Dave's vital excitement communicated itself to his son.

The 2691 loomed out of the night, wheezing asthmatically. Her huge headlight was proudly high, but Dave knew her for a beaten engine. That last gasp, as the spark-flickering wheels slid to a stop, was like the death rattle in a human throat.

Three figures clambered painfully down from the deck, as Tom Russell came running up the platform to greet them. Great fatigue hollows could be distinguished through the grime, under Amos Boyd's eyes, and he moved uncertainly, like a somnambulist. Dave yelled a greeting. The spent driver blinked and shook his head.

"Is it really you, Dave?" he asked.

The two drivers shook hands, as the hostlers took the crippled 2691 off the silk train. Presently, the 1819 was coupled on, wheezing and creaking somewhat, as engines new from the erecting shop usually do.

Dave made a circuit of the engine, peering here, there and everywhere. Then up on the deck he climbed for an inspection of the cab and the fire that had been built.

He rattled off a stream of commands to Hildreth, he swore at the fire, and at this, that and the other thing. But, finally, he settled back on his dilapidated seat pad with a sigh of contentment.

While Hildreth was attending to the fire, Dave arranged his tobacco pouch and his matches in their accustomed places. His pipe going, he looked back down the train impatiently, to where the car inspectors were frantically tapping wheels and peering underneath.

He contained his impatience, however, for the cars had come a long way at high speed, and none knew better than he the necessity for picking out any defects before they started on their longer and even faster journey.

Tom was standing on the platform under the cab window. From that height he seemed ridiculously small and frail. When the conductor had given the highball, and Dave had answered on his whistle, Tom cupped his hands to his mouth, and shouted:

"Good luck, eagle-eye! My job's riding with you."

Dave tooted an acknowledgment, as the 1819, a mangy-looking engine, took the silk train out of town.

XXI

Dave thrilled to the touch of the throttle. The years' long aching hol-

lowness in the palm of his hand was suddenly filled. He was like a man awakening from an uneasy sleep to welcome the bright dawn of a youthful day.

The old surge of strength, of power, came up his arm in long waves that pulsated through his body. His whistle for the R. & M. crossing signal was a soaring defiance to the puny gods who had thought that he, Dave Morrows, the best damned driver on the division, was licked. *His last run, maybe, but what a run it would be!*

In his ecstasy he had no time for details. They were across the R. & M. tracks and swinging into the curves before the throttle jerker looked about him. A further sense of pride enveloped him as he saw Hildreth in the glare of the firebox door.

This giant, swinging so easily and gracefully to the rolling of the deck, his scoop hitting the sill of the firebox door with a sharp *ping* that told of coal being distributed evenly over the grate bars, this was another Morrows, superbly ready to carry on.

The old hoghead laughed, a sudden, burbling laugh, startlingly like that rare laugh of his son, and, as he laughed, he threw his right hand up in a highball to the stars.

This was a recapture of the gay mood that had won him the distinction of the runningest fool on the division. With it came a return of that clear, cool judgment that rounds out the combination to make the perfect driver.

A glance at the needle told him that Hildreth was storing up steam for the long pull up Knowlton Hill. He leaned back to squint into the firebox door. The even, steady glow that met his eye when next the door opened reassured him. The kid would do.

Then, with ears strained, he listened to catch the mood of the 1819. After a minute, he grinned.

"She recognizes my touch," he told himself exultingly. "She knows me still, after so long a time. Frisky as a colt, now that she has some one who understands her at her throttle."

He felt a sudden impulse to try to take the huge engine into his arms, and then swore chidingly at himself for being a silly fool. Lovingly, he joggled this and wiggled that, easing the load for his beloved engine, as they swung around the long curve that marked the beginning of the upgrade.

"Take it in high, old girl," Dave roared. "You're not pulling an accommodation now, you're back among the firstest of first class trains, where you belong."

As if in response, the engine snorted and blew, swinging into and around the curves with a reckless abandon, yet hovered just within the border of safety.

Old Dave shouted with joy upon finding he had not lost the trick of rounding a curve at high speed as the 1819, after teetering perilously, swung back into the perpendicular after making a curve without perceptible slackening.

Up the hill, a blinding headlight suddenly appeared. "That's No. 18," Dave muttered, for he had conned the line-up thoroughly, "in the hole at Knowlton, waiting for us to get by."

"Clear board," Hildreth chanted, and Dave realized again that this was his son.

"A real railroader, that kid," he confided proudly to the 1819.

The big engine labored up and up through the darkness. The summit was in sight, it was reached, and with steam to spare, Dave noted. He cast

an approving glance at Hildreth, who beamed in reply. The boy was a fireman. Those broad, heaving shoulders were doing a perfect job.

They straightened out for the long flight over the racetrack. Now, there would be running!

The wheels of the 1819 became spinning circles of reflected moonlight, and the engine seemed to touch the rails only to spurn them in a dizzy rush. Dave snatched off his cap, so the wind might bestow a violent caress on the hair that was now whiter than it had been the last time Dave passed over the racetrack.

The last time—Dave realized with a start that they were almost upon that fateful sidetrack at Callville. With a sickening sensation in the pit of his stomach, he wondered if his run would terminate before he got there; if the engine, the train, everything, would black out just after they had passed Dwight. They always did on those front porch runs through the long, wearisome nights.

And, supposing they didn't. Then what? He clutched frantically at the arm rest on the window sill of the cab. He felt all the parts of the locomotive within his reach, to assure himself of their reality.

Dwight was a mere flash of swift light at the speed they were making, and Dave found himself in a cold sweat. This was no dream run, they'd have to pass Callville. His hand reached for the throttle. He couldn't go on—he couldn't.

But, while his whole body went tense, and his hand still gripped the throttle, he ground his teeth and refrained from yanking it back. He fought an almost uncontrollable impulse to swing the throttle back on the quadrant, and to throw himself from the cab window before the train could stop—anything, anything, rather than pass that siding at Callville.

A gleaming headlight flashed into his eyes from out of the black night. It was No. 16, waiting on the Callville siding for the crash, waiting until the 1819 would come leaping into it once again. Dave screamed, and the hand grasping the throttle began to move it slowly backward, fight against it as he would. The 1819 slackened speed, a trifle wonderingly, it almost appeared.

"What's the matter, dad?"

Dave looked down from his seat into the sweat-begrimed face of his son.

"Nothing, nothing," he gasped.

With an effort that seemed to wrench the soul from his body, he pushed the throttle forward again. The 1819 responded gayly, and Dave tensed himself for the crash. While he did, the 1819 thundered across the switch and roared past No. 16, holding proudly to the main line.

Dave sank back, like a spent runner.

"That's over, you damned old idiot," he chortled. "Come on now, baby, let's show them some *real* running!"

XXII

Back in the dispatchers' office at Sommerton, the tired-eyed superintendent nodded in his chair. The chief dispatcher rushed over to him.

"He's by Callville already. He'll beat our line-up, if we can keep things out of his way."

A jubilant light came into Tom's eyes. "What a runner!" he said, reverently.

Hildreth was extremely glad of the respite at Hightower to take coal and water. Tom had had the forethought

to wire ahead for a hostler to do the work, so that Hildreth could sink down on his seatbox for a moment's relaxation.

"How you getting along, kid?" his father yelled.

The engineer's beaming face seemed to give him new life, and his scoop was light again as they pulled out for the long downhill run to Benton.

Dave glanced at an order and called Hildreth over. "Soft track north of Helenville, the roadmaster says. What about it? Shall we slow up there? If we do, we lose about half an hour."

"Hell, no!" was Hildreth's instant response. "Let's make that half an hour or go in the ditch. We need half hours."

Dave warmed with an affectionate glow as he squeezed a bit more speed from the engine. The miles swung by, and a bit of sun came peeping over the hills.

Dave drank in the dawn. He had not believed that it could be as lovely as he remembered it. He had always been ashamed for his love of the dawn on the roaring road, but here it was, even more glorious than his memories.

Through perspiration and backache, Hildreth saw it, too, and he paused for a moment to admire. Father and son intercepted each other's rapt glances, and Hildreth crossed the cab to throw an arm about the old man's shoulders. Two heads, strikingly alike in contour, were proudly side by side. Two pairs of misty blue eyes looked down the track into the rising sun.

There was, at long last, a bond between these two moody Morrows, a bond that would never be broken. Together they labored grimly with the 1819 in those last, long miles, when the slightest effort was a torture almost too great to be borne, and together they descended from the cab at the conclusion of a run that will never be forgotten on the L. & S.

Dave looked across at Hildreth with a smile of deep contentment.

"The hardware business," he said to himself, "has lost a prospective shining light."

IN THE CAB OF THE WESTBOUND MAIL

OH, come take a trip on my Iron Horse tonight with the westbound mail.
Come see the ghosts on the canyon wall as we roar down the winding trail.
Sit here by my side as the miles flip by to the purring song of the stack,
While we careen at a sixty clip and green lights wink by the track.

Come ride in the cab, see the shadows dance in the stabbing rays of the light,
While ripples on the stream below lend a romantic thrill to the night.
Lean out in the breeze, see the towns whip past and gaze on the endless rail.
Oh, yes! We'll be on time tonight as we ride with the westbound mail.

That structure ahead is Pitt River Bridge, high up in the Sierra Hills;
Out across Bogard Flats we will romp, and down past the Red River Mills.
We'll skim Lake Almanor's blue green shore, through Feather River Canyon sail,
Clock Greenville and Keddie right on the dot on time with the westbound mail.

It's nice to lounge back there in a coach where one can relax and rest
As the big Pacific type leads you on through the night and into the west,
But ride up here on the business end as we roar down the W. P. trail;
You'll get the thrill of your lifelong dream when you ride with the westbound mail.

—O. EARL LYLES, Western Pacific Engineer.

Albert Was Too Kind-Hearted to Make Good—He'd Stop the Fastest Train on the Line for Anybody!

THE OBLIGING OP

By Jacques Girouard

ONCE upon a time there was a young man named Albert Denton who wanted to railroad. Albert was a grocery boy in Pineville. He was so courteous and agreeable and willing to do favors that all the women who traded at Bowers' Grocery loved him. Through Mrs. Ryan, wife of Superintendent Barney Ryan, to whom he had confided his desires, Albert was given a job as call boy.

But Albert did not intend to remain a call boy. He was too ambitious. In no time at all he was studying telegraphy. Opinions were that he should have studied gandy dancing. Nevertheless, by the time he was old enough to vote, big-hearted Barney Ryan hired him as an operator in spite of the protests of Billy Merton, the chief dispatcher.

"He's an ambitious lad," said Barney. "He deserves a chance to make good."

"He'll never do it!" Merton declared. "The kid's a ham. Besides, he's too good-natured, too easy. Can't say 'no.' Everybody will impose on him. He has no backbone and even less ability. You'll see."

A year later Superintendent Ryan was forced to admit that Albert looked like a hopeless case. A dozen jobs had been his and each time he had been

moved from them because of incompetency. Albert, it seemed, just couldn't catch the hang of things.

Nevertheless, Ryan did not discharge him. There was something pitiful about the boy. He was such a willing chap, so eager and uncomplaining, that Ryan felt it would be a crime to throw Albert into the cruel world on his own.

"Send him up to Sequoyah," Ryan told Merton. "Not much to do up there. No stock shipments any more. He can handle that, I'm sure."

So Albert went to Sequoyah and the tiny station which served the little town of fifty persons. Before he had been there a week everybody in town was calling him "Al." By the time winter set in he was about the most popular man in town. Anybody wanting a little help or a favor knew he could get it.

Albert's hours were from ten at night to six in the morning. He liked the job. It gave him plenty of time to read and study. Then, too, it was inside work. For that reason the big blizzard which swept the country in November worried him not at all. Neither did the thaw which made impassable the country roads. The railroad furnished plenty of coal and a good stove. Nothing to do but carry in the fuel and put it in the stove.

He had just finished putting in a heavy fire one night when a man came into the depot. The man was big and broad-shouldered and tanned of face. It was a kindly face.

"You the operator?" he asked Albert.

"I am," Albert replied. "Something I can do for you?"

"That's what I'm wondering," said the man. "My daughter has taken ill suddenly. Doctor says it's appendicitis. He can't operate. He says we'll have to get her to Kansas City to a hospital immediately if she is to live. I was just wondering if I could get you to stop the Meteor."

Albert studied the request. The "Meteor" was the road's crack train. The only stops it made were at division points and county seats. He was not so sure that such a request could be granted. He said as much, and the man's face fell.

"But I'll ask the dispatcher."

He did. The sounder was silent for a moment while the dispatcher recovered from the shock. So rapidly came back the reply that Albert had difficulty in getting it down on paper. When the sounder rested, he read what he had written:

> Of course you can stop the Meteor. You can stop any of our fast trains for the accommodation of any of the small town hicks. And don't you ever dare ask such foolish questions again, you boob.

"The dispatcher says I can stop the train for you," Albert informed the waiting and worried father. "It is due here at 2.00 A.M. You've got an hour to make it. Think you can be here?"

"I'll be here," said the man. "And many thanks. I won't forget this favor, young man."

So that night the Meteor stopped at Sequoyah. There were many growls from the engineer and caustic comments from the conductor, but they took on their two passengers and vowed to find out why they had to stop. It was easy to see that they did not believe Albert.

When the Meteor was OS'd to the dispatcher, that gentleman almost went crazy. Albert could tell from the way the sounder jumped and bounced and rattled that the dispatcher was mad. Hardly had the dispatcher signed off when the night chief got on the line.

"Pack up your clothes, kid," rattled the sounder. "You're through. I'm sending man to relieve you in the morning."

"But the dispatcher said I could stop them," Albert protested.

"You ass!" clicked the sounder. "Read that message over again."

Albert did. Long before he had finished he knew he was whipped. The dispatcher was merely being sarcastic. He should not have stopped the train.

The town was deeply sympathetic over Albert's plight. The justice of the peace sent a letter protesting against the removal of such an exemplary young man. Perhaps that explained why no man came to relieve him the next day.

But it didn't. Two days later Superintendent Ryan came through on his private car, tied on the rear of the local, and greeted Albert effusively.

"Nice work you did stopping that train the other night," he said, shaking the op's hand. "You sure are to be congratulated."

"I'm sorry," Albert apologized. "I thought I was doing right."

"Of course you did right," the super assured him. "You showed better judgment than any of my so-called officials. I got a letter from Mr. George Farnham the other day saying that from now on he was shipping all his stock over our road. He hadn't shipped anything by our lines for ten years. He had a run in with the claim department, got peeved and quit us. The C. H. & D. had been getting that business. Now we get it, thanks to you."

Albert blinked. He was still in the dark to some extent. Ryan went on:

"Mr. Ross, our livestock representative is in ecstasy. He wants me to ask you if you'd consider coming into his department. Says he needs a live wire like you. If I were you, I believe I'd take it. Better chance for promotion there than in the operating department. More money, too. What do you say?"

"I'd love it!" said Albert. "I always did like animals."

P. R. R. TRACKS TESTED WITH GLASS OF WATER

PREPARATORY to the usual fall selection of prize-winning sections of track on the Pennsylvania Railroad, maintenance engineers are now checking the riding qualities of track in every part of the system. An ordinary glass of water is filled to within an eighth of an inch of the rim. It must not spill a single drop, even on the fastest flyers! This is known as the "slop test."

The tumbler of water is placed on a table or small platform on a fast express train. Every spill is carefully recorded and a mark is chalked up against that particular section of track. No rail section is allowed to deviate from the Pennsy's maintenance standard to insure the smooth riding of all trains.

In addition to the water test, the P. R. R. uses a recently designed machine which records the slightest jar or jolt. Not a jump, swerve or sway escapes this delicate mechanism. It operates on finely adjusted springs and records automatically on a running paper strip the exact condition of the track. As a result of these tests, annual awards are made to the grizzled veterans who keep the rails in line and the roadbed in shape.

No Good, Huh? Well, Old Sam Could Wield a Shovel as Well as Any of Them

HIS LAST RUN

By Rufe Gable

VERY cautiously "Shanty Sam" Etterson edged his way into the front door of the yard office. Yardmaster Ely recognized the shuffling footsteps, and with a bored sigh arose, seized Sam firmly by the shoulders, pointed his nose out the door, then firmly planted the toe of a number eleven shoe in the seat of Sam's atrocious overalls.

"—and stay out," thundered Ely casually as he dusted his hands in the doorway. "We're sick and tired of your infernal brag around here."

Buffeted and baffled and pained with indignity, Shanty Sam crossed the network of tracks that made up the Hill Junction railroad yards. For the past month he had been thus unjustly treated by the men of the Oil Belt & Western Railroad.

"That Mayme—she's behind it!" Sam muttered bitterly. "A-claimin' I'm a-ruinin' that Smoky kid of hers with my tales! Why, I could tell that kid more about railroadin' in five minutes than this whole terminal layout ever did know."

For the past year Sam had lived in a pine-board and tar-paper shanty down by the sand pit at the south end of the yard where he eked out a livelihood by working at odd jobs. Periodically, when the necessary properties were at hand, he went into closed consultation with unlabeled bottled goods, and Junction Hill saw nothing of him

until the days of his solitary jubilee were finished.

He was a garrulous old bore who lived in the glory of the past when his name was on the payroll of every pike between Minneapolis and El Paso—those days of power and activity before he lost in the final struggle with Rule G.

But of late the terminal had turned upon Sam a cold and callous shoulder and had closed its ears to the sound of his voice. At his approach loafers scattered and workers got busy. Down in the yard within the past week, three different foremen had gruffly instructed him to clear out.

And now Yardmaster Ely had added physical violence to a long list of indignities by actually kicking him out of the office. Shanty Sam sat upon a pile of ties at the edge of the yard and considered the matter.

Mayme, the hash queen of the Yard Limit Café—that was the answer. Mayme of the Amazonian physique, the steady, piercing eye, and the firm, indomitable will that made its possessor the mistress of any situation.

Her beanery was as much a part of the Junction Hill terminal as the turntable or the roundhouse; and she, the proprietress, as much a power in Junction Hill as the division superintendent.

This Mayme had excommunicated Sam. She had warned him that his yarns were unfit for the tender ears of her young protégé, who was prophetically known as Smoky; and she had mentioned the east rail of track No. 7, passing ten yards from her front door, as the deadline over which Sam might cross only at his own risk.

"Her, a woman who never packed a hot box or pulled a pin in her life, her a-callin' me a liar!" he raved. "No man's gotta stand a thing like that. I'm goin' to have a run-in with Mayme."

With his hat pushed back at a defiant angle, and with a fire in his eye that Junction Hill never had seen, Sam headed straight across the deadline track with deliberate, although somewhat stiff and ungainly, stride.

II

But Sam was deflected from his mission. On the knife-engraved wooden bench in the awning shade of the beanery sat a youngish, red-faced stranger with a three-day growth of beard and the overalls and jumper of a trainman. Sam would have passed him—for at the moment he had no eye for strangers—but a firm hand caught a trouser leg as he brushed past.

"Gotta match, mister?"

Sam explored a ragged pocket and produced the desired article.

"Happen to know anything about the layout in this here yard?" inquired the stranger cautiously. "Any rattlers goin' south soon?"

An audience! For a month Sam had suffered from a lack of just that, and now he had one thrust upon him. Sam gave the desired information with great detail as became him.

Within ten minutes he had learned that the stranger was a "tallowpot" looking for a job, had predicted an early end to the prevailing strong motorcar competition, and had unburdened his garrulous being of that thrilling account of his experience in the sandstorm on the S. P.

Sam was in his glory, for the stranger listened attentively. Forgotten was his mission to the beanery. Sam had an audience.

"Smok-ee!"

A feminine voice, strong and deci-

sive, interrupted Sam's breath-taking narrative of the washout on the Nevada Central. Sam sprang up to face the indomitable Mayme.

White-aproned, immaculate, stern and capable, she stood in the doorway, arms akimbo, momentarily diverted from her search for the errant Smoky by sight of the intruder.

Sam caught the storm in her eyes. It caused him to recall one time having seen Mayme with one Amazonian hand entwined in the collar of a "thousand-miler,"* the other grasping the seat of a pair of big Smith overalls, casually eject a husky brakeman from the beanery for the crime of being fresh. Mayme herself was the undisputed judge of what constituted freshness.

The hot passion of Sam's first flash of anger had subsided, leaving him capable of reason; and reason told him that a man cannot fight a woman—especially Mayme. Therefore, with commendable discretion, Sam removed himself hastily and without dignity from the danger zone.

III

"Just what's the idea for swingin' the war-hatchet at old Shanty Sam?" asked Clint Jones, the brains on the Mint Hill local, the day Mayme had declared her ultimatum to Sam.

"Lookin' out for Smoky," declared Mayme crisply. "That little dickens sits pop-eyed listenin' to them tales of Sam's for hours at a time. They're givin' him a bad slant on life. And, besides, I hate a liar."

"Mayme's right," agreed George Harp, the hogger. "That old windbag ain't a fit associate for the kid."

Men always agreed with Mayme; for Mayme was as straight as a gage edge and as loyal as a fraternity brother. A strictly businesslike eating house was the Yard Limit Café, clean as a snowbank from cigar stand to kitchen.

Mayme had done things that made men respect her above others of her kind. There was the time she made a tourniquet of a tea-towel and saved Grant Peeler's life, the day he slipped and got a leg cut off in front of the lunch room. And another time she rode a switch engine to the scene of a smash-up of some extra-gang cars and saved ten section laborers by swift, cool-headed action. But eclipsing all this was her masterful handling of the case of Smoky.

Smoky was preordained to be a waif. Fate selected for his maternal parent the not unattractive, somewhat giddy-headed waitress in the Yard Limit Café. Heaven knows the identity of the father. When the girl mother found other interests and left her offspring and the beanery, Smoky came to recognize no mother but Mayme.

"Keepin' the kid, Mayme?"

"Positively." That settled it.

Smoky became the pet of the O. B. & W. terminal. But he was not spoiled by unfit companions. Mayme saw to that.

With her two muscular hands she boxed the jaws of a brawny and uncouth switchman when she heard him teaching Smoky a vile word. The men of Junction Hill realized what Mayme was trying to do; and be it forever said to their credit that they joined hands in helping her.

"That kid," announced Yardmaster Ely to the terminal in general, "belongs to me and you and the rest of us as much as he belongs to Mayme. Mayme's tryin' to raise him up like he'd ought to be. And I'm warnin' every son of a monkey on this pike

* *Shirt commonly worn by boomers.*

that with my two hands I'll break the head of any man who makes a bad crack at Smoky."

Junction Hill was consecrated to the task of properly raising the youngster. They would have nothing to do with any bum who might offend him.

So it was that Sam, lonely and dejected, made his way slowly toward his shack out by the sand pit. Life was bleak, now that he had nobody to talk to. The spirit of the rails was in old Sam. His fatal weakness for booze and consequent physical unfitness prevented his activity on the gleaming steel.

And now a cruel fate had deprived him the solace of living again in narrative the adventures of his colorful past. Not without cause was old Sam downcast.

The afternoon sun beat savagely upon the shack and set it shimmering in the heat waves. Shanty Sam reckoned to a fraction of an inch the width of the narrow strip of shade its meager height would afford, and his thoughts turned regretfully back to the cool awning of the beanery and the appreciative stranger there eager to listen.

But as his heels crunched the cinder approach to his domicile, a diminutive figure raced from the interior to meet him. It was the much-discussed Smoky.

"I come to see you, Sam," the kid announced slowly, with all the serious pride of his scant five years. "Why ain't you been up to see us? Tell me a story."

Sam seated himself upon a rickety stool, with Smoky perched upon a box beside him. Indecision assailed the host. Smoky was being searched for. The strictly honorable thing was to send him straight back to the beanery. But, on the other hand, Smoky had come of his own volition, and his attentiveness was to Sam an oasis in the desert of unappreciation. Here was a true child of the rails, and he had asked for a story. Sam hadn't the heart to turn him out.

For half an hour one tale followed another, with Sam in his glory and young Smoky wide-eyed in wonder.

IV

SUDDENLY from the direction of the yard came a sound of conflict—loud shouting and a round of pistol shots. Smoky led Sam by two jumps out to the sand-spur track, where a view might be had.

A hundred yards down the main line stood engine 862, her pumps churning, her stack lazily smoking. Sam knew, without further evidence, that No. 83, the fast merchandise train, had pulled into the yard, that the yard engines were switching off some loads, and that the 862 would soon pull the train on its southward journey.

By the same sort of deduction he knew also that the engine crew was in the beanery eating a bite before pulling out. But it was farther up the track that the excitement was taking place.

Some distance away a man was racing alongside the train. Behind him came two other men, shooting as they ran. Shanty Sam's heart gave a choking jump as he recognized the fugitive as his chance acquaintance at the beanery. The pursuers he recognized as Jeff Murphy and Page Brace, special agents for the O. B. & W.

Then in an instant the thing happened. Smoky, who had been jumping up and down, jabbering with excitement, quickly sprinted away in the direction of the fugitive. The kid wanted to be closer to the excitement.

His shout of warning unheeded, Sam struck out after the boy; but with

his stiffened muscles and short wind he was hopelessly outclassed.

Murphy and Brace, seeing the child, stopped shooting and yelled frantically for him to run back. But Smoky continued straight toward them.

Near the tender of the 862, Smoky stopped to gaze wide-eyed at this entirely new brand of amusement. The fugitive wheeled to a halt beside him and whipped two pistol shots back at his pursuers.

Then, snatching the astonished Smoky up under an arm, he raced up the gangway of the waiting engine. Smoky was jammed down upon the engineer's seat, where his presence provided an effective shield for the fugitive.

There was a hiss of steam and air and the clang of side-rods, and the engine groaned into movement. Brace, leading Murphy by five yards, reached the grab-iron of the tender and swung to the footboard.

A jumper-clad figure leaned out the engine cab window over the diminutive figure of the boy and a pistol barked. Brace clapped a hand to his side and sprawled to the ground, while the engine, gaining speed with every yard, left behind a growing crowd that had gathered at sound of the turmoil.

"It's Two-Face Magin!" shouted Murphy to the crowd. "Call an ambulance. He's plugged Brace through the lung. He grabbed up that kid so's we couldn't shoot back, curse him!"

Up the track stood Shanty Sam, his flabby face a patchwork of wrinkles as he witnessed these scenes of violence. His recent acquaintance was Two-Face Magin, notorious killer, for whom a network of officers was spread throughout the State! In his effort to get through, Two-Face had affected the guise of a trainman looking for work.

The fact that he had beheld, talked with, and loaned a match to this notorious bandit sent through Sam a momentary sense of importance closely related to the speculation that this would afford another morsel of narrative. But that pleasant speculation was cut short by a realization of horror.

Sam knew that in the hills a few miles south of town engine 644 was at work with the ditcher. Sam had seen it pull past his shack a few hours ago, and he had heard the men talking about it at the yard office. This work extra would have the main line blocked, and with a desperate fugitive racing the 862 around those curves there would be an inevitable smash-up—and little Smoky was aboard!

Shanty Sam Etterson was not easily aroused to any sort of passion, but now there burst from him a fierce snort of anger. That stranger might be Two-Face Magin and a bad man, but he was a sneaking coward to shield himself over the body of a five-year-old kid!

As the engine crept toward him, Sam sprang between the main line rails and swung to the pilot footboard on the left hand side. Then, using all the speed possible with his long unaccustomed legs and unsteady hands, he climbed to the running board and made his way slowly toward the fireman's window.

V

Back in the yard there was a moment of wild confusion. Mayme herself, early upon the scene and always a quick and direct thinker, touched a keynote of decisive action.

"The yard office! Have the dispatcher clear the main line before that maniac wrecks the engine."

"But, Mayme," protested Yard-

master Ely, "there's that work extra out there, between here and Grover Switch. There's no way in God's world to get word to him!"

"Well, don't stand there!" screamed Mayme. "Get an engine. We'll follow 'em. Hustle a doctor, somebody."

In less than two minutes all the efficient machinery of a great and well organized railroad was geared to handle an impending tragedy. Telegraph wires clicked, phones buzzed, each man at his post like a trained soldier.

Five minutes behind the runaway, a yard engine pulling a flat car was speeding on the fugitive's trail. In the engine cab rode Mayme and a doctor from the company h o s p i t a l with emergency kit in hand. On the flat car rode Murphy and Ely and half a dozen other men.

Back in the yard the wrecker, called for hurriedly, was steaming up in preparation for the grim task of clearing up the wreckage.

Throughout the Junction Hill terminal from superintendent's office to section toolhouse spread the tragic tidings that Two-Face Magin was using little Smoky for a shield while he raced a stolen engine into certain destruction!

VI

MEANWHILE, the 862, throbbing with the power of wide-open throttle, quickly gathered terrific speed. Old Shanty Sam, inching his way along the running board, had to cling tenaciously to the hand rail to keep the wind from sweeping him off. At length he reached the fireman's window and squeezed his bulk into the cab.

Two-Face Magin, seated behind the throttle with the frightened Smoky in front of him, caught the sight of movement. He wheeled snarling, his automatic yawning upon old Sam.

"Why, it's the blasted old gusher that was up at the beanery!" he ejaculated with wide-eyed incredulity. "How in the name of the holy ghost-walker did you get here?"

Unmindful of the gun, Sam stepped deliberately across the cab. Little Smoky, with a glad cry of recognition, dived for his leg. Two-Face, without removing an eye from Sam, plucked him back like one might return a kitten to a basket.

Shanty Sam noticed with a distinct thrill of pride that although Smoky was wide-eyed and badly frightened, there was no sign of tears. A real child of the rails, Smoky!

That realization gave Sam courage and decisiveness. He had told Smoky tales without number in which he, Shanty Sam, had braved and overcome the most insurmountable obstacles. Smoky believed them. He looked upon the story teller as a hero. And Sam must make good.

"Put down that gun, Two-Face!" he commanded with a new-born authoritativeness. "Let me at that throttle. I'm stoppin' this engine. There's a work extra ahead, and you're headed for a wreck."

"You don't say!" snarled Two-Face contemptuously. "And jest what you intend to do about it, old fossil? Think you're comin' on deck and give orders to Two-Face Magin? Now git this. I'm givin' the orders—and you're takin' 'em. See that scoop behind you against the apron? Grab it, and feed this kettle the coal."

"But I'm a-tellin' you there's a work train ahead!" stormed Sam. "You ain't wreckin' this engine—not with the Smoky kid aboard."

An ugly look distorted the killer's

face. A fist shot out. It caught Shanty Sam on the chin and sprawled him.

"Mebbe that'll learn you to talk back," snarled Two-Face. Slowly and dazedly Sam pulled himself to his feet.

"Feed her," snapped Two-Face. The automatic barked and a bullet burned a passage against the flesh of Sam's leg.

In the glittering eyes of the killer he read a message that was final. Sam seized the shovel. His first awkward swing missed the firebox door and scattered coal over the deck. Again the pistol barked. Sam felt a bullet tug at the back of his shirt.

"Inside the firebox," stormed Two-Face. "And keep her hot, hobo. I'm showin' you some speed. You ain't foolin' me about no work extra. There's a high-priced train detainer up there in the office who'll break his neck puttin' 'em in the clear for Two-Face Magin."

Sam shoveled coal, but even a hard-boiled desperado and a threatening gun could not still his tongue.

"Think I'm lyin' about that work train, do you?" he growled. "Well, you'll change your mind when we hit 'em."

"Shut your mouth, bum! Feed that baby coal; that's all you gotta do. Gimme more lip and I'll sink you full of slugs and kick your carcass down the gangway."

While miles of gleaming rails sped under the spinning drivers, Two-Face ran a practiced eye over the gages, and his hand rested on the throttle with a touch of familiarity. Once, as they flashed past a whistling post, his right hand unconsciously crept toward the whistle cord, but he stayed the move for reasons of his own.

"An old rail, all right," muttered Sam Etterson under his breath. "Told the truth about that, and I reckon he's tellin' the truth about bein' bad."

Then suddenly a curve sent Sam reeling across the cab. "See, we've struck the hills!" he shouted above the engine's clatter. "That ditcher's workin' in these hills. They ain't a chance in a thousand of seein' 'em in time to stop."

Two-Face set his jaw grimly, but he made no reply. It had been a happy providence that had enabled him to lift the kid and steal the engine at the same time. With the boy aboard they wouldn't risk derailing him nor even shooting at him.

But, of course, there was a remote possibility that the old bum was right about there being some train which was out of reach of a telegraph office and therefore couldn't be warned to get into the clear. So, obviously skeptical and determined to run the risk, Two-Face's glittering eyes peered defiantly ahead, alert for the first signs of an obstacle in his path.

Thus occupied, he appeared to take no notice of the fact that Sam had ceased shoveling coal and was now leaning out the fireman's window, straining his eyes for the sight of smoke ahead. Neither did he notice that Smoky had slipped from the seat in front of him and had crawled up closely beside Etterson.

"There she is!" Shanty Sam suddenly wheeled into the cab shouting like a crazy man. "I saw her smoke around the next curve!"

Two-Face also had seen the smoke. His arm stretched to the throttle and stiffened, but he moved the throttle not a notch. As they rounded the curve the work extra loomed into view almost a quarter of a mile away.

A fiendish light shone in Two-Face's evil eyes. They'd hit hard. There

would be tons of twisted steel. There'd be bodies tangled in that wreckage, and it would take a lot of searching to find them.

Magin sprang out of the seat and backed down the right hand gangway. He was on the outside of the curve, and he could jump without being seen by the men on the work train.

The coming wreck should cover his trail for hours. It would be that long before they would know he had escaped. But first that hobo must be plugged, else he might stop the engine before she hit.

Magin's evil eyes searched the cab, and for an instant they met the puzzled gaze of Shanty Sam. Something in that glance conveyed to Sam at least a partial understanding of the killer's cold-blooded intentions.

Stark terror gripped him. For an instant he swayed with the wild impulse to turn and leap down the opposite gangway, but he savagely dismissed the thought. Smoky was in the cab, trusting old Sam to save him.

Two-Face's gun rose and the muzzle searched for Sam. With an outburst that was half an oath, half a wail, like a cornered beast that can do nothing but fight overwhelming odds, Sam dived face downward upon the rocking deck. The gun barked, but the bullet passed high over his head.

Sam's fingers fastened upon the handle of his discarded shovel. Sprawled there, he swung it, aiming it madly at the head of Two-Face just above the level of the deck.

Two-Face dodged, but too late. The shovel struck, flat side down. With his skull crushed like an eggshell, Two-Face sprawled to the ground and rolled grotesquely after the tender.

The ancient boomer instantly became all action. Two jerks shut off the throttle and set the air. The 644, whistling frantically and madly spinning her drivers in the effort to back up, loomed just ahead.

Sam knew he was too late. There would be a head-on! Sweeping Smoky into his arms, he raced down the gangway and leaped.

VII

Shanty Sam regained consciousness with a hum of voices in his ears. Gradually there came to him distinctly the familiar booming voice of Yardmaster Ely.

"Yessir, Sam could 'a' saved himself easy as pie, only he was huggin' that kid to protect him. Didn't even try to break his own fall—and Smoky not even scratched! And nobody even seen him crawl into that engine! Blast me, Pete, when we get back I want you to kick me all the way from the yard office to the beanery for the things I've done and said to old Sam. Doc, dammit, ain't there nothin' you can do for him?"

Sam felt a hand stroking his face. To him it felt soft and smooth and tender. His eyes fluttered open. Mayme's face, lined with concern, was close to his. His head was in her lap.

A dozen men were bending over him, anxious, uncertain, eager to help. A proud smile played weakly over Sam's pallid features. He had an audience; he had a story; and this time there would be no doubting, no jeering, no sly winking.

"Hated to quit the—old hog," he gasped. "Never did—b'lieve in a man—quittin'—his kettle. But had to—get Smoky out. Bad egg—that Two-Face. He—"

Sam's story was never finished; the old boomer had reached the end of his last run.

RAILROADING IN THE JUNGLE

By H. T. Wilkins

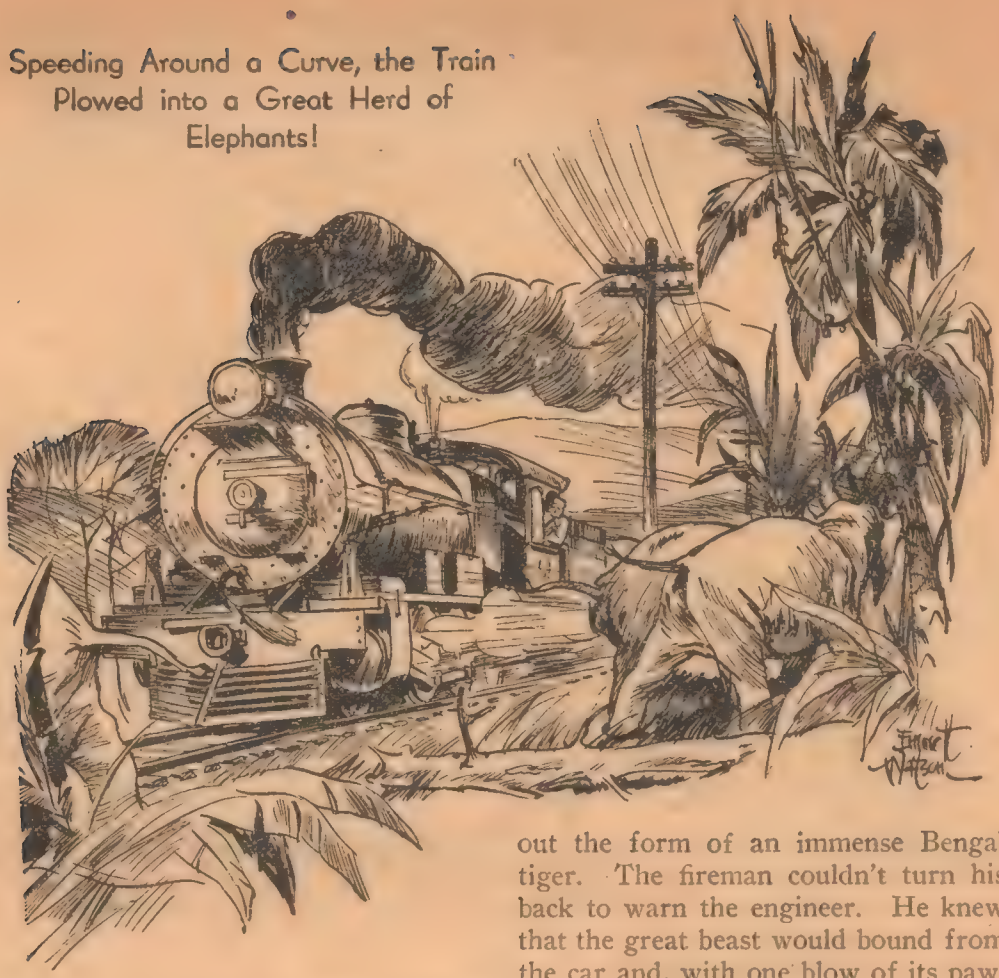
"BUILDING a railroad may be a hard job, but running one in the Tropics is a thrilling one."

The speaker was a boomer engineer who was swapping stories with a number of his friends and fellow-engineers. He had just returned from railroading in India and other of the British colonies.

"I remember a cold night in the wild upcountry region of India, where the trans-continental railroad ran through the jungle. In the cab of the locomotive the engineer opened the regulator (throttle) wide, and the heavy train of coffee, tea and plantation produce thundered at high speed through the darkness.

"Fast running was necessary, for

Speeding Around a Curve, the Train Plowed into a Great Herd of Elephants!



the train was rushing to catch a freight steamer due to leave for England on the next day from a port 300 miles down the line. The native fireman had all he could do to keep up the steam pressure. He was reaching for the shovel, and was on the point of raking forward one of the huge blocks of coal when he stopped in his tracks as though paralyzed by a stroke of lightning.

"On the roof of the car in back of the engine tender two great shining eyes in a dark, heavy shape glared in his direction. There was just enough light in the cab for the fireman to make out the form of an immense Bengal tiger. The fireman couldn't turn his back to warn the engineer. He knew that the great beast would bound from the car and, with one blow of its paw, break his neck and back. The slightest sign of fear would at once be detected and terribly punished by the tiger. Moreover, if he shouted loudly enough for the engineer to hear, the tiger would think the expression on his face was also a sign of fear.

"Fortunately the engineer sensed something wrong. He glanced 'round. He saw the fireman standing still as a statue, and then he caught sight of the glowing eyes on the roof of the car. His hand closed on the throttle. The rapid blast of the engine died down to a quiet purr, and the brakes went on hard. With a sudden kick he

Mountain Type Used on the South African Railroad—Built by Montreal Works

jerked open the firebox door and a blaze of light lit up the interior of the cab.

"The rebounding freight cars, sharply checked, bucked against the engine, whose own powerful brakes repelled the thrust. The engineer opened a gage cock in the cab and filled the cab with steam. Then he held down the whistle. Those two eyes no longer burned on the top of the freight car! The astonished tiger had jumped from the car and sped across the track into the darkness of the jungle. How he ever got on the train is a mystery. Probably as the train stopped to take in water he had sprung onto the car in search of the food.

"One of the enemies most dreaded by Indian railroad engineers is the snake, sometimes found in the tenders of engines which burn wood. I recall one night when the fireman of a mail train running from Madras to Bombay was heaving logs into the furnace. Suddenly he sprang back. A lithe form uncoiled itself from a billet of wood and reared into a hooded crest, golden in color, and streaked with marks like spectacles. Two beady eyes glittered above a hissing mouth.

"The fireman had aroused a hooded cobra, one of the most dangerous snakes in the Orient. Its bite is certain and painful death. The reptile had been awakened from its slumber by the warmth of the fire radiated from the open door of the firebox. In an instant the engineer and fireman rushed to the running boad outside the cab, their only thought to get away from the angry snake. The express rushed past signal after signal in the darkness of the night. It soon became necessary to check the speed of the

First Class Sleeper on the Kenya & Uganda Railroad of Africa

train, for the mile posts alongside the track told that the engine was swiftly approaching an important railway junction, where a terrible accident was certain if they ran through without stopping.

"Bracing himself, the fireman peered round the corner of the cab, saw the cobra basking in the warmth of the open firebox door. Watching his opportunity, he darted in, caught the reptile at the back of its head, and hurled it into the flames. And the engineer shut off steam just in the nick of time.

"Another Indian train was wrecked by a collision with insects. It ran into millions of locusts. The engineer applied his brakes, but the sticky grasshoppers had so greased the tires of the wheels that the brakes were of no use, for the wheels slid on the rails. The train banged into a stop-block and the engine turned completely over, just as the men managed to save their lives by jumping clear.

"High up on the plateau at Darjeeling is a picturesque railway. So much big game wanders in this region that the engineer has to stop and light a powerful flare on the top of the cab of his engine to frighten off the wild beasts of the jungle. He has no wish to follow the example of a certain Mohammed Shaik, an engineer on a goods train on the Eastern Bengal railway, who was charged by the police with knocking down and killing a great elephant employed by the Rajah of Dauripur. The police insisted that Mohammed saw the elephant on the line and might easily have stopped the train in time.

"Not for untold money will the Hindu engineer run down a sacred cow. I know of a railway in Rajputana where the train to Delhi was

"Happy," a Sad-Eyed Leopard, Looking over the Canadian National Right-of-Way en Route from India to the Toronto Zoo

crossing a sandy desert. Suddenly the brakes ground the wheels. Everybody got out, and went along the line to the head of the train, where a white zebu, lost in the desert, had strayed onto the track.

"The oil-stained, turbaned Hindu engineer bent over the zebu, which was calmly sitting down between the rails. Gently pulling the animal's horns and tail, he persuaded her to rise. A woman passenger draped the cow's horns and neck with a wreath of flowers. Finally they got the animal off the track. The native passengers now climbed into their third-class carriages, and the train went on its way."

Another engineer, whose face was deeply bronzed by his exposure to tropic rays, interrupted with a story of his experiences with the Asian elephant.

Railroad construction laborers were

at work, he said, in the forest of Travancore, in southwest India, when a tree fell across the track. To remove it the tree was set on fire, but the flames began to spread to the surrounding woods. The workers were about to stamp out the fire, when they were startled by hearing a loud and angry trumpeting. They scattered in haste, as a magnificent tusker, followed by a herd of wild elephants, emerged from the bush. Following the lead of the tusker, the elephants squirted water from their trunks onto the blaze, a brook near the road being their water main. The astonished laborers, from the safety of a box car, watched the elephants extinguish the fire and drag the tree into the middle of the track again.

Again, an elephant was standing in his open car at Chinchvad, India, recently, waiting for the freight train to proceed over an electrified section of road on its way to Bombay. Sighting an overhead wire, the pachyderm waved an exploratory trunk, received the shock of its life, and sat down heavily.

But only for a minute. With nerves frazzled, the great beast arose and smote the overhead equipment so effectively as to ground it.

The main line was blocked, substations were tripped out, and only after considerable delay, during which the irritated animal's trunk was lashed down and his car placed on a siding, could the train proceed. The elephant was made to get out and walk the remaining 100 miles to Bombay.

After a short talk about lions in general, a Rhodesian engineer told about a South African stationmaster who sent two frantic telegrams:

> Please send further police protection. Men very brave, but less so when lions begin roaring.

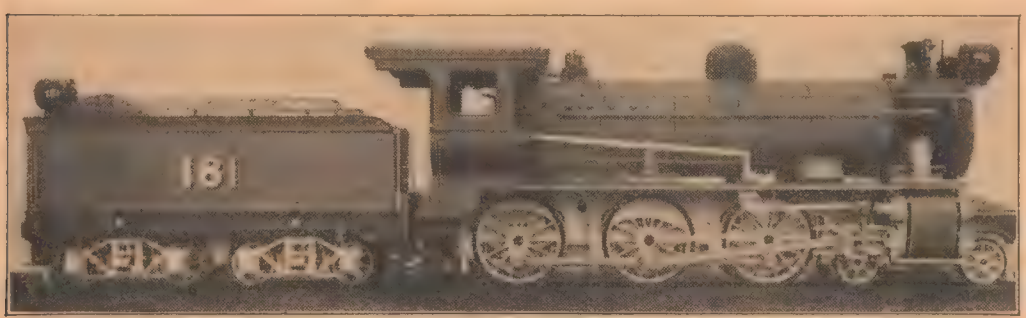
Then:

> Please let 10 A. M. run up the platform disregarding signals. Signalman up post. Lion at bottom.

When the 10 A. M. passenger train arrived from Bulawayo, the engineer looked cautiously out of the window of his cab and saw a full-grown lion stalking an unfortunate man clinging to the top of a signal post. The terrified stationmaster and his men had barricaded themselves in the railroad buildings and were making frantic signals to attract the attention of the engineer, who had shut off steam when approaching the station.

He now released the brakes, and slightly opened the throttle to allow the train to move slowly up the platform. Then he opened the cylinder cocks. The exhaust steam gushed from the piston outlets. The whistle shrieked. The lion fled to the woods.

In another case, a construction train



One of the Five Passenger Locomotives Built Recently for West Africa's Gold Coast Railways

This Baby Didn't Stop, Look nor Listen for the Train of the Rhodesian Railways, So. Africa. The Train Was Derailed, but the Elephant Was Killed

was puffing heavily along the Cape to Cairo railway through a wild country in Northern Rhodesia, when the engineer saw a full-grown lion stretched right across the rails! He whistled; the lion awoke, sprang at the front of the boiler and sought a foothold on its smooth surface. Again and again the beast leapt. Finally, as the train gathered speed, he fell under the wheels and was killed.

In the same country a passenger train from the famous Victoria Falls was near Malindi station. Suddenly, at a turn of the track in the heart of the jungle, the engine ran into and was derailed by a herd of 36 wild elephants crossing the line! The cowcatcher was snapped in pieces. At Malindi station there can still be seen the skull of a bull elephant killed in the collision. This elephant measured eleven feet at the shoulder, and its tusks were four feet long.

Railroad engineers on the lines in Central Africa have often complained about trouble caused by baboons who roll boulders down hills on to the newly made tracks of the right-of-way, and by monkeys, who look on the railroads as places for pilfering expeditions.

There is a railway in Mauritius which transports sugar cane from the fields to the mills. Monkeys, learning of the proceedure, stationed sentinels to give warning when the train was approaching a grade. As soon as the engine was puffing slowly up the hill the tribe of watching monkeys leapt onto the freight cars and threw off loads of cane till the engine had made the hill. It has become necessary to station a special guard to keep these robbers off the line!

Single-track railroading in the jungles is a tough proposition, but it's an interesting and thrilling one.

By the Light of the Lantern

Ask us what you want to know

RAILROAD questions are answered here without charge, but these rules must be observed:

(1) Not more than two questions at a time. No queries about employment.

(2) Owing to the number of queries, no engine specifications are printed except type, driver and cylinder dimensions, weight, and tractive force (t.f.).

(3) Sign your full name and address as evidence of good faith. We will print only initials, without street address.

(4) Always enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope, to facilitate our getting in touch with you if necessary.

(5) Answers to questions are published in this department. Don't be disappointed if they do not appear at once. This department is printed two months in advance of date of issue.

A FRIEND of mine claims the cylinder of a locomotive passes over the piston. He says he proved it by standing still and holding a stick on the crosshead while the engine was moved forward. Is this possible?—L. S., Daytona Beach, Fla.

Under no circumstances would it be possible *all the while* the piston is making a stroke. Obviously, too, it would be impossible when the piston is moving in the same direction the engine is moving, for under such a condition it must move faster than the engine. The piston could stand still in relation to the ground only when it is traveling opposite the motion of the engine at a speed exactly equal to that of the engine. But a locomotive with, for example, 70-inch drivers moves about 110 inches every time one of its pistons slides its full distance along the cylinder. If the piston has an ordinary stroke (from 20 to 30 inches), its speed would coincide with that of the locomotive only for a very brief second near the middle of the stroke, when the piston is moving much faster than it is at either the beginning or the end of the stroke. And so even if the circumference of the driving wheel were exactly twice the length of the piston stroke (which would mean that the engine would move in one stroke a distance equal to the stroke), the piston would not stand still in reference to the ground throughout the stroke.

R. C. L., Biddeford, Me.—According to the latest available figures, the SP System (including Mexican line) has 2,527 locomotives, 77,391 box, 2,455 passenger, and 6,299 miscellaneous cars. Santa Fe System: 1,904 locomotives, 90,929 box, 1,536 passenger, and 5,781 miscellaneous cars. CMSt.P&P: 1,703 locomotives, 65,123 box, 1,230 passenger, and 3,897 miscellaneous cars. UP System: 1,619 locomotives, 57,404 box, 1,301 passenger, and 3,988 miscellaneous cars. Burlington System: 1,327 locomotives, 58,481 box, 1,106 passenger and 4,326 miscellaneous cars. GN: 1,105 locomotives, 47,642 box, 898 passenger and 2,673 miscellaneous cars. NP: 1,006 locomotives, 48,499 box, 888 passenger, and 3,312 miscellaneous cars. The Grand Trunk Pacific is a part of the Canadian National, and no separate figures have been compiled for it. The CN has 3,096 locomotives, 124,977 box, 3,718 passenger, and 7,993 miscellaneous cars.

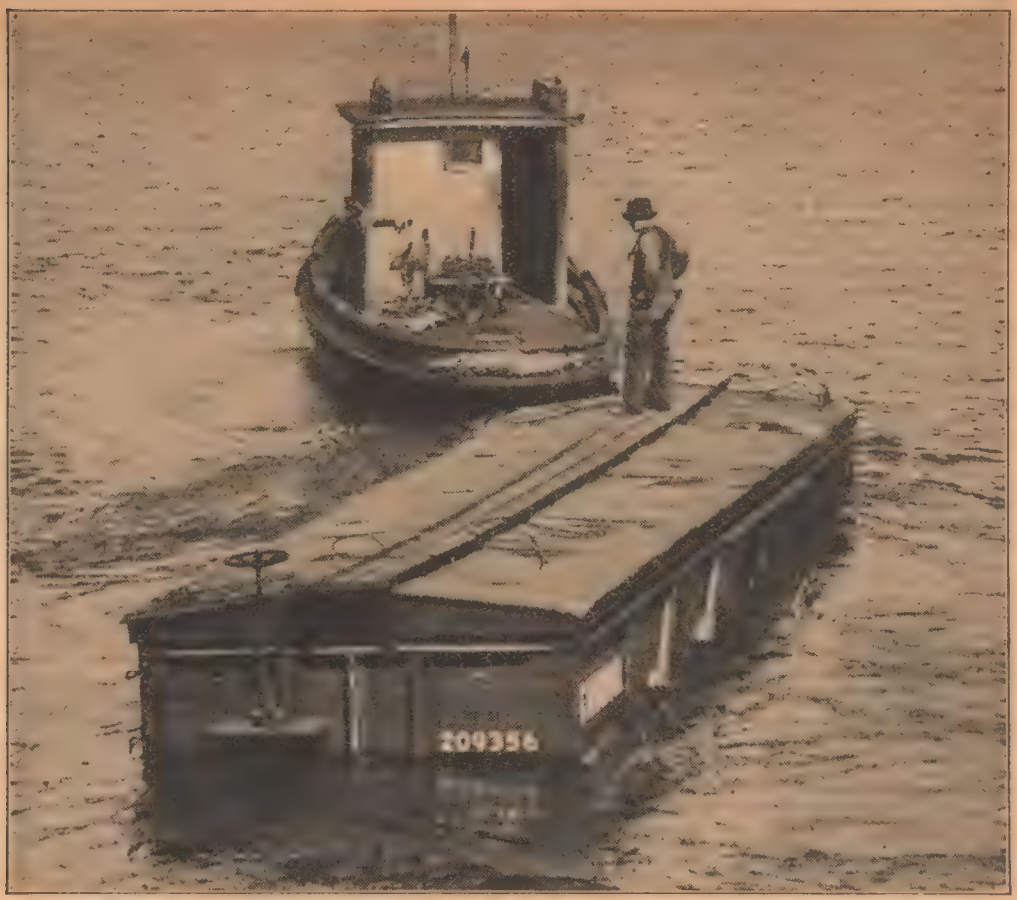
Other data you asked for in future issue.

R. S., Grand Junction, Mich.—The mechanism connected by an endless chain to the trailing wheel of the B&O passenger engines is the speed recording apparatus. It keeps a record of the number of miles per hour maintained throughout the entire trip and also registers the speed on a dial in the cab.

The type of signal box you mention is a dwarf signal, semaphore type, and is used to give slow speed indications at interlockings where track centers do not permit high signals.

B. K., Brooklyn.—Following are United States' 15 largest railroads (in total operating revenues). These figures are for 1931:

Pennsylvania	$448,090,279
New York Central Lines	382,190,182
Southern Pacific System	192,380,031



Rolling Stock Becomes Floating Stock—Three Box Cars of Lumber Tumbled Off a Barge During a Recent Storm near Vancouver, B. C. They Had to Be Towed in by Tugboats!

Santa Fe System	$181,181,260
Baltimore & Ohio	158,474,627
Chesapeake & Ohio	119,552,171
Illinois Central System	116,788,194
C. M., St. P. & P.	111,423,772
Burlington System	111,218,959
Chicago & North Western	102,270,339
N. Y., N. H. & H.	100,331,093
Southern	97,715,112
Missouri Pacific	95,268,193
Rock Island System	93,050,288
Erie	90,153,601

E. P., Lexington, Mass.—Theoretically an articulated engine having two high-pressure cylinders does not burn as much coal as one with four, for compound construction is more economical than simple construction. The reason that the latest four-cylinder locomotives are all simple is that the same economies which used to be effected by compounding the locomotives are now obtained by the use of superheated steam, thus doing away with the objectionable features of compound locomotives.

No economical limit for steam pressure has yet been determined. While the expense of constructing a full size, 1,200-lb. pressure boiler would be prohibitive, granting that any track today could carry its weight, the new high-pressure types of the New York Central and the Canadian Pacific, which employ a pressure of 1,200 lbs. in a small auxiliary boiler, seem to be no more expensive to maintain than an ordinary locomotive. Engines have been built lately with 275 and 300 lbs. pressure in a regulation boiler, and they seem to be noteworthy for economies in operation.

W. M. B., Jr., Durham, N. C.—The New York Central Hudson type locomotives cost about $90,000 each when they were first built. Undoubtedly the price has come down since then. We have no figures on the Canadian National's Hudson type, but probably they came to a similar figure. The Seaboard Air Line 4-8-2

From Railroad Photographs. 5 Appian Way, Allston, Mass.

B. & O. "Capitol Limited" at Speed on the Famous 100-Year-Old Thomas Viaduct, Relay Station, Md.

type engines, 250 series, were bought in 1925 for approximately $49,000 each. The R-F-P and Southern do not give out information about locomotive costs.

It is impossible to say whether the NYC or CNR Hudson type engine is the fastest. Both have the same piston stroke, but the CNR engine has driving wheels one inch larger than the NYC locomotive. The latter, however, has a larger firebox, bigger boiler and greater heating surface, so that it might maintain a higher speed with a heavier load for a longer stretch than the CNR type. All in all, they are very nearly alike, and it would be foolish to give either one a decided edge.

W. T. S., San Francisco.—Chicago is undoubtedly America's (and the world's) largest railroad center. Thirty-four lines enter it. It is difficult to say which city is next, for no authentic figures are available on tonnage moving into and out of large centers. If the number of railroads entering a city is to be the basis of a choice, St. Louis would be next with 24 lines.

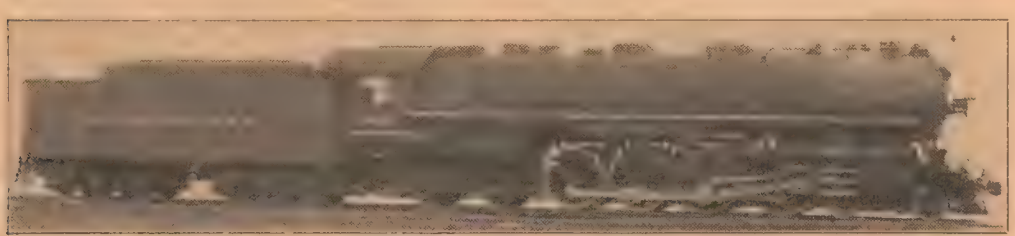
S. K., San Leandro, Calif.—The Alton & Southern 14 class, 0-10-0 type, has 28 x 30 cylinders, 57-inch drivers, 230 lbs. pressure, weighs 559,800 lbs. with tender and exerts 80,500 lbs. t. f.—96,300 with tender booster.

Big Four 6400 class, 4-6-2, has 23½ x 26 cylinders, 79-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, exerts 30,900 lbs t. f.

J. P., Syracuse, N. Y.—The speed limit on the Horse Shoe curve of the Pennsylvania R. R. is 30 miles per hour.

A. M. W., Trenton, N. J.—Great Northern passenger cars are painted a dark brown.

M. R., Worcester, Mass.—The general offices of the Central R. R. of New Jersey are located at 143 Liberty St., New York City.



The Lackawanna Recently Bought Ten More of This Type (Nos. 1621-1630), Two of Which (Nos. 1629, 1630) Are Completely Equipped with Roller Bearings

G. P., Santa Cruz, Calif.—Southern Pacific has 83 Mountain or 4-8-2 type locomotives; class Mt-1, Nos. 4300-4327; Mt-2, 4385-4390; Mt-3, 4328-4345; Mt-4, 4346-4366; Mt-5, 4367-4376. Class GS-1, 4-8-4 type, is numbered from 4400-4409, 700-703.

D. R., San Francisco.—Following are tractive force data on SP types: Class A-3 (4-4-2), 24,680 lbs. t. f.; Mt-4 (4-8-2), 57,510 lbs. t. f.; P-1 (4-6-2), 31,420; P-5 (4-6-2), 31,420; P-10 (4-6-2), 43,660; P-11 (4-6-2), 33,700; S-5 (0-6-0), 25,190; S-8 (0-6-0), 27,380; S-10 (0-6-0), 29,720; T-31 (4-6-0), 38,400; T-32 (4-6-0), 38,320; TW-1 (4-8-0), 35,650.

W. W. J., Kirkwood, Mo.—Missouri Pacific 2-8-4 type, Nos. 1901-1925, has 28 x 30 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 240 lbs. pressure, weighs 412,200 lbs. without tender and exerts 69,400 lbs. t. f.

F. F., Westfield, N. J.—The rolling stock and motive power of the Alton have been renumbered and reclassified to correspond with the rosters of the B&O, which has taken it over.

E. H. N., Geyserville, Calif.—The President of the L&N is W. R. Cole, Louisville, Ky.; CMStP&P, H. A. Scandrett, Union Station, Chicago; D&RGW, J. S. Pyeatt, Equitable Bldg., Denver, Colo. See article on page 355 for salaries of railroad presidents.

R. M., Los Angeles.—Chicago Great Western Nos. 90, 91 and 95 were 4-4-0 type and had 19 x 24 cylinders, 68-inch drivers, 170 lbs. pressure and exerted 18,410 lbs. t. f. They are now scrapped.

The term "Air Line" was extensively used years ago to describe the route of a railroad which followed the shortest route between two points. It is used little today, and in most cases has lost its original significance.

The Green River, Wyo., yard of the UP is larger than that of Rock Springs, Wyo.: the former has 195,000 track feet of sidings; the latter 141,700, plus 44,000 track feet of mining spurs.

We cannot say why the western transcontinental systems "run on such slow passenger schedules." There probably is some good operating reason for it. At present lines are speeding schedules up; perhaps in a few years they will not "loaf along, even on long stretches of flat land."

W. E. S., Ft. William, Ont.—Canadian Pacific class D-10-g, Nos. 871-961, 4-6-0 type, has 21 x 28 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, weighs 198,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 33,400 lbs. t. f.; class D-10-d, Nos.

One of the Reading's Latest Freight Haulers. The Engine Illustrated Was Rebuilt from No. 1800, an Old Mallet Type

From C. V. Cook, 6121 Harrison Ave., Hammond, Ind.
Off the Track! Tender of N. Y. C. Engine of 15 Years Ago. The Vestibule Attachment Was Used to Prevent Splashing of Car Door on Trains Which Took Water on the Fly at 60 m.p.h. Those Not Thus Equipped Were Limited to 45 m.p.h.

600-669, 782-784, 4-6-0 type, has 22½ x 28 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 180 lbs. pressure, weighs 191,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 34,500 lbs. t. f.; class P-1-d, Nos. 5001, 5007, 5011, 5100-5119, 2-8-2 type, has 23 x 32 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 190 lbs. pressure, weighs 262,500 lbs. without tender and exerts 43,500 lbs. t. f.

L. B., Westfield, N. J.—No history of the Jersey Central is available. If we come across any historical information about it we shall publish it in this department.

E. W. J., Medicine Hat, Alta.—Canadian Pacific class G-3-a, Nos. 2300-2303, 4-6-2 type, has 25 x 30 cylinders, 75-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, weighs 299,000 lbs. without tender and exerts approximately 42,500 lbs. t. f. Class G-4-a, Nos. 2700-2711, 4-6-2 type, has 24½ x 30 cylinders, 70-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, weighs 299,000 lbs. without tender and exerts approximately 48,600 lbs. t. f. Class H-1-a, Nos. 2800-2809, 4-6-4 type, has 22 x 30 cylinders, 75-inch drivers, 275 lbs. pressure, weighs 351,200 lbs. without tender and exerts 45,250 lbs. t. f. Class P-2-e, Nos. 5360-5379, 2-8-2 type, has 23 x 32 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 250 lbs. pressure, weighs 327,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 57,100 lbs. t. f. Class T-1-a, Nos. 5900-5919, 2-10-4 type, has 25½ x 32 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 275 lbs. pressure, weighs 452,500 lbs. without tender and exerts 77,200 lbs. t. f. See answer to W. E. S. for 5100 series.

O. M., Montreal, West.—The Central Vermont has 67 locomotives.

Here are comparative data on power of CNR and CPR engines:

CPR		Tractive Force	CNR		Tractive Force
2800	(4-6-4)	45,250	5700	(4-6-4)	43,300
			with booster		53,400
5367	(2-8-2)	57,100	3533	(2-8-2)	54,600
3100	(4-8-4)	60,800	6100	(4-8-4)	56,800
2900	(4-8-2)	43,000	6000	(4-8-2)	49,600
2500	(4-6-2)	34,500	5500	(4-6-2)	34,000
6100	(0-6-0)	27,600	7500	(0-6-0)	36,000

Others in future issue.

S. F. C., Gaylord, Mich.—The cars of the Boyne City, Gaylord & Alpena which carry the letters "CS&CCDRy" formerly belonged to the Colorado Springs & Cripple Creek District Ry., which went out of existence many years ago.

W. W., Paterson, N. J.—The Erie's through passenger trains from New York to Chicago change locomotives at Hornell, N. Y., and Marion, Ohio. If you will look at the builder's plate on the Erie 2500 series you can readily determine which company made it. This plate is located on the right hand side of the locomotive, just under the smokestack. That of the American Locomotive Company is rectangular; Baldwin, round; Lima, diamond-shaped.

R. J. F., E. St. Louis, Ill.—Wabash engines Nos. 601-611 have 80-inch drivers; Nos. 612-623, 84-inch drivers.

The New York Central Lines have 225 Hudson type locomotives in use: Nos. 5200-5344 on the New York Central, Nos. 8200-8229 on the Michigan Central, Nos. 6600-6629 on the Big Four, Nos. 600-619 on the Boston & Albany.

C. B. B., Des Moines.—It is impossible to get authentic information about the Burlington train which made 98 miles an hour in 1902. We suggest you look through Chicago newspapers of that date for the information you want. Perhaps some reader can help you out.

The Pere Marquette installed a few years ago an experimental concrete roadbed which seems to be quite successful. Although it costs considerably more to build than an ordinary track, the main-

From W. E. Miller, 162 Luckie St., N. W., Atlanta, Ga.

Old-Time Erie Eight-Wheeler No. 45. Can Any Reader Supply Details?

tenance comes to little or nothing. On page 595 of our November, 1931, issue we took it up in greater detail.

E. S., Pacific Grove, Calif.—Railroads buy their telegraph supplies from many different concerns. Go to your local dealer and ask him for the addresses of the district offices of Graybar, General Electric or any one of the large companies; they undoubtedly sell telegraph keys and sounders to railroads in your district, and will be glad to help you get the kind of a key you want.

R. C., Westwood, N. J.—The Erie's freight trains running west out of Buffalo ordinarily use the Buffalo & Southwestern division via Jamestown.

Erie class K-2, 2900 series, 4-6-2, has 27 x 28 cylinders, 77-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, weighs 299,020 lbs. without tender and exerts 45,070 lbs. t. f.; class K-4, 2700 series, 4-6-2, has 25 x 28 cylinders, 69-inch drivers, 210 lbs. pressure, weighs 284,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 45,270 lbs. t. f.; class K-4-a is now the same as K-4-b, which has 25¼ x 28 cylinders, 75-inch drivers, 215 lbs. pressure, and exerts 43,500 lbs. t. f.; class H-20-c, 2100 series, 2-8-0 type, has 22 x 32 cylinders, 62-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, weighs 218,940 lbs. without tender and exerts 42,500 lbs. t. f. Classes K-5 and K-5-a, 4-6-2 type, have the same main specifications: 27 x 28 cylinders, 79-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure and 43,900 lbs. t. f. Class K-5-b, 2960 series, 4-6-2 type, has 28 x 28 cylinders, 79-inch drivers, weighs 321,870 lbs. without tender, and exerts 47,200 lbs. t. f.

F. G. H., Providence.—The New Haven has 2-10-2 type engines in a 3234 class and 4-8-2 type, 3-cylinder engines in a 3556 class.

New Haven class K-1-d, Nos. 260-299, 326-349, 351-369, 371-419, 420-479 has 22 x 28 cylinders, 63-inch drivers, 190 lbs. pressure, weighs 166,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 34,700 lbs. t. f. Originally these had 20 x 28 cylinders. Some of these are no longer in use, but there were 195 in this group.

G. M., El Paso.—A Café-lounge car is practically the same as a Café-observation car, except that the latter has either an open observation platform or a glassed-in sun room at one end. In both half the car has lounge chairs, radio, etc., and the other half four or five tables and a kitchen.

A. M., Oklahoma City.—Rock Island class P-40, Nos. 950-979, 4-6-2 type, has 25½ x 28 cylinders, 74-inch drivers, 190 lbs. pressure, weighs 281,500 lbs. without tender and exerts 39,736 lbs. t. f. Class P-46, No. 999, three-cylinder Pacific type, has 22½ x 28 cylinders, 74-

Canadian National Mogul, Built in 1914 by the Canadian Locomotive Co.

inch drivers, 190 lbs. steam, weighs 301,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 46,400 lbs. t. f.

S. T. W., Knowlton, Quebec.—Canadian Pacific class G-3-d, 4-6-2 type, Nos. 2326-2350, has 23 x 30 cylinders, 75-inch drivers, 250 lbs. pressure, and weighs 306,500 lbs. with tender.

R. H., Brooklyn.—A booster raises the starting tractive force of a locomotive because it acts as a separate locomotive. It is attached to the trailing wheels of a locomotive, which, as you know, have no connection with the driving rods. When the booster is cut in, the trailing wheels also help to carry the engine forward.

J. R. W., Kamloops, B. C.—CNR class T-2-a, Nos. 4100-4104, 2-10-2 type, has 29 x 32 cylinders, 57-inch drivers, 200 lbs. pressure, weighs 409,240 lbs. without tender and exerts 80,200 lbs. t. f.; class K-5-a, Nos. 5700-5704, 4-6-4 type, has 23 x 28 cylinders, 80-inch drivers, 275 lbs. pressure, weighs 356,400 lbs. without tender and exerts 43,300 lbs. t. f.—with booster, 53,400; classes P-4-a, P-4-b and P-4-c, Nos. 8200-8221, have 26 x 30 cylinders, 56-inch drivers, 180 lbs. pressure and exert 55,408 lbs. t. f.

The Virginian 800 series, 2-10-10-2 type, which are the world's most powerful locomotives, have 30 and 48 x 32 cylinders, 56-inch drivers, 215 lbs. pressure, weigh 684,000 lbs. without tender, exert 176,600 lbs. t. f. simple, and 147,000 lbs. t. f. compound.

Central Vermont 700 series, 2-10-4 type, has 27 x 32 cylinders, 60-inch drivers, 250 lbs. pressure, weighs 419,000 lbs. without tender and exerts 76,800 lbs. t. f.—with booster, 89,900.

A. L. W., Chester, Pa.—Lehigh Valley 2-8-0 type has following specifications: Class M-17, 20 x 24 cylinders, 145 lbs. pressure, 50-inch drivers, weighs 125,925 lbs. without tender, and 23,903 lbs. t. f.; class M-35 has 21 x 30 cylinders, 205 lbs. pressure, 62½-inch drivers and exerts 36,885 lbs. t. f.; class M-36 has 23 x 30 cylinders, 205 lbs. pressure, 62½-inch drivers and exerts 44,245 lbs. t. f.; class M-36½ has 21½ x 30 cylinders, 205 lbs. pressure, 62½-inch drivers, and exerts 40,482 lbs. t. f. Class M-37 has 23 x 30 cylinders, 200 lbs. pressure, 55½-inch drivers, and exerts 48,610 lbs. t. f.

M. N.—We recommend "Distinctive American Trains," published by H. C. Barker, 1136 Connecticut St., Lawrence, Kansas. It contains a complete alphabetical list of important American roads and their best passenger trains, names, territory covered, and date of inauguration. In addition, a short description of each train's distinctive features is printed. This pamphlet sells for 35 cents or three for a dollar—plus postage. We regret that it is not illustrated, but it might come in handy for picture fans.

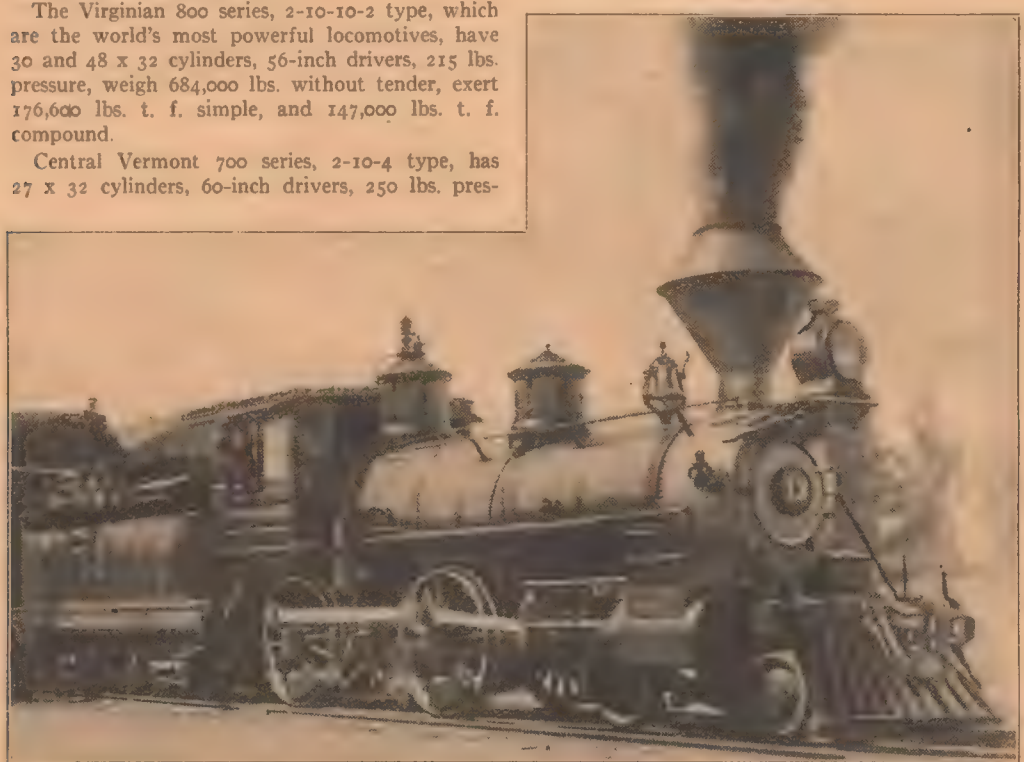


Photo by L. S. Slevin, Carmel, Calif.

No. 13 of San Francisco & North Pacific (Now Part of Northwestern Pacific) at Santa Rosa, Calif., in 1902

From an Old Print

Scene of Conflict between the Pennsy and the Delaware & Bound Brook R. R. in 1876

THE FROG WAR

By E. J. Burns

HOPEWELL, N. J., where the world's most famous baby was kidnaped and murdered. a few months ago, was the scene of a pitched battle between two railroads in 1876. That was the year the Jarrett & Palmer special made its sensational run from New York to 'Frisco, two years before the Canyon War in Colorado, and five years before Jesse James's last train robbery.

The "Frog War" was not so funny as its name suggests. Thousands of persons were drawn into the conflict—including four companies of New Jersey State Militia—and several casualties were reported.

In 1860 the entire Pennsylvania Railroad was merely a main line between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pa., with a few short branches. Under the energetic management of J. Edgar Thompson it entered upon an expansion program. By acquiring the old Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago line in 1869, the P. R. R. obtained a continuous road from the banks of the Delaware to the shores of Lake Michigan. Then came an entry into New York City through purchase of the United R. R. & Canal Co., which owned lines across New Jersey.

That started the trouble!

In June, 1871, the Pennsy built a branch in New Jersey known as the Mercer & Somerset R. R. It ran from Somerset Junction through

Hopewell to Millstone. Permission to cross its right-of-way one mile west of Hopewell was sought by the Delaware & Bound Brook R. R., which had been organized in 1874 to build 27 miles from Yardley, Pa., to Bound Brook, N. J.

"Nothing doing!" said the Pennsy.

"The Offending Frog"—An Old Cartoon

The P. R. R. backed up its refusal by stationing Engine No. 679 and a caboose on that site for three months to prevent the laying of a cross-frog. Now, a cross-frog, as every railroader knows, is a section of track used where one railroad crosses another on the same level. It is usually made as a solid piece and is quite heavy.

The Pennsy's M. & S. was a single-track road. When regular trains came along, the 679 with its "crummy" would go onto a sidetrack, returning to its accustomed position on the proposed crossing as soon as the train had passed.

Meanwhile, the Delaware & Bound Brook pretended to have given up the plan to cross its rival's tracks, and turned its attention to building westward. But in the early evening of January 5, 1876, some two hundred D. & B. B. laborers and farmers from the vicinity hid behind cornstacks in a field one mile west of Hopewell. Being winter time, darkness had set in early and the men were not seen when, at 7:20 P.M., the 679 and her caboose ran onto the siding to allow the regular train to proceed eastward.

As soon as the train had gone by, the men ran out from ambush. They blocked the 679 in front and rear with ties, then chained her to the track. A farmer named Van Dyke pressed a gun against the body of the P. R. R. switchman stationed there.

"Better keep still," Van Dyke snarled, "if you don't want a bullet in your gizzard!"

Others menaced the P. R. R. engine and train crew, while laborers tore up a section of the Mercer & Somerset track and placed the cross-frog in position.

News of what was happening was telegraphed to Superintendent Jackson of the P. R. R. Jackson swore a mighty oath. He summoned Engineer George Ellis and a stalwart crew.

"Take Engine No. 336," he ordered. "Run to the scene with all possible speed, burst through the obstructions and place the guard engine on the frog."

Ellis was at Millstone when he got the instructions. Putting on full steam, he reached the battleground in half an hour, burst through the barricade and knocked the ties off the track.

But in doing this the 336 was derailed. Two other P. R. R. locomotives were rushed to Hopewell, but before they could do any work they were seized and disabled by the Delaware & Bound Brook army, who then completed the crossing job. Thus there were four crippled Pennsy engines on the spot.

The following afternoon the P. R. R. sent two hundred reinforcements to the scene, while a special train containing Superintendent Jackson, Attorney E. T. Green and other Pennsy

officials pulled out of Trenton to collect additional forces from Newark and Jersey City.

Filling three carloads with grimly determined men, they wired instructions to all stations along the line to assemble all available help. Eventually nearly 1,000 Pennsy sympathizers reached the point of attack.

The Hopewell sheriff, J. S. Mount, turned out with a squad of deputies heavily armed, but finding the situation out of his hand wired frantically to Governor Bedle on January 7th:

> Send me two companies of soldiers immediately, as there are not less than 1500 men here now and more coming. Am looking for a clash every moment.

The governor dispatched four companies of troops, who took possession of the frog, while farmers and laborers for miles around brought out muskets, pitchforks, scythes and other weapons, determined to protect the D. & B. B. Sporadic battles broke out, with casualties on both sides.

Finally the "war" was ended by a court decision January 8th permitting the Delaware & Bound Brook to cross the other railroad. The P. R. R. was awarded $350.00 damages, and Hopewell's peace was undisturbed until the kidnaping of the Lindbergh baby in 1932. The D. & B. B. is now part of the Philadelphia & Reading System, which took it over in 1879.

BIG SALARIES IN THE RAILROAD INDUSTRY

THE depression has hit the railroad industry pretty hard since 1929. Many brothers who have given the best of their lives to railroading find themselves cut off the board. But there's still money in the game. If you don't believe it, look at these Interstate Commerce Commission figures on official salaries as of March, 1932.

J. J. Pelley, president of the New York, New Haven & Hartford, who in December, 1929, was making $75,000 a year, now gets $90,000. G. M. Schriver, senior vice president of the B. & O., in 1929 knocked down a cool $75,000 a year, but was receiving $76,500 this year. E. V. Engel, Santa Fe vice president, is drawing $500 more a year than in 1929, when he got $40,000. But the Santa Fe did even better by Vice President F. B. Houghton, and gave him $33,750 a year, $750 more than in 1929.

The Union Pacific paid Vice President F. W. Charske $4000 more than he received in 1929. He now gets $54,000. The Lehigh Valley increased Vice President G. H. Foster's $21,000 a year in 1929 to $21,600. L. C. Probert, assistant to the Chesapeake & Ohio president, gets $2000 a year more than in 1929. He now receives $27,000. M. H. Cahill, of the M-K-T, who in 1929 drew $50,000 as president, is paid $65,000 as chairman and president.

Most official salaries, however, have been slashed considerably. President W. W. Atterbury, Pennsylvania, dropped to $135,000 before March, 1932. Since then he has been reduced to a bare $121,500.

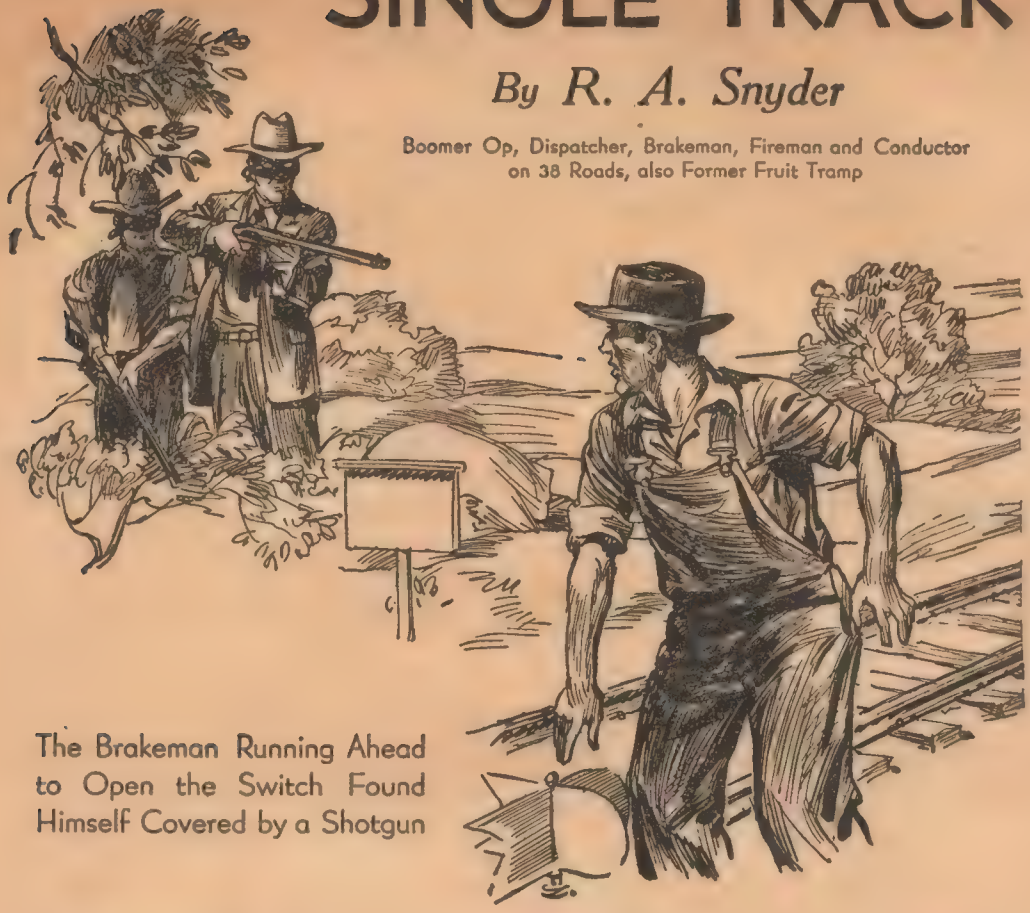
Here are some other figures as of last March: Executive Chairman Hale Holden, Southern Pacific, reduced to $135.000; L. F. Loree, president, D. & H., and board chairman, Kansas City Southern, $135,000; President Daniel Willard, B. & O., $120,000; President L. W. Baldwin, Mo. P., $105,167. President L. A. Downs, Illinois Central, $90,000; President J. J. Bernet, C. & O., $90,000; President Paul Shoup, S. P., $90,000; President F. E. Williamson, New York Central, $80,000; President Ralph Budd, Burlington, $75,000; President E. E. Loomis, Lehigh Valley, $72,000; Presidents F. Harrison of the Southern, C. E. Denney of the Erie, J. M. Davis of the Lackawanna, H. A. Scandrett of the Milwaukee, W. B. Storey of the Santa Fe, A. C. Needles of the N. & W., $67,500 each; President J. M. Kurn, Frisco, $63,800; President F. W. Sargent, North Western, $61,000.

All of these officials receive more pay than the President of the United States. Presidents W. P. Kenney of the Great Northern and W. L. Ross of the Nickel Plate make an even $60,000 apiece. Salaries of the big executives of other roads average well below the $50,000 mark.

SINGLE TRACK

By R. A. Snyder

Boomer Op, Dispatcher, Brakeman, Fireman and Conductor on 38 Roads, also Former Fruit Tramp



The Brakeman Running Ahead to Open the Switch Found Himself Covered by a Shotgun

THE smoothly polished sedan ate up the desert miles as it turned southward at Dayton into the highway leading to Los Lunas, almost 100 miles away. It had been following the highway paralleling the Q. & S., a main line transcontinental.

Now it ran along a railroad known locally as the Los Lunas & Northern, which headed for Los Lunas through miles of deep canyons and a desert below sea level.

Bob Hays, a fruit tramp, was driving the car. With him was "Yakima" Joe, peer among packers of lettuce and cantaloupes in the Southwestern Valley.

About two hours out of Dayton they were startled by the hiss of escaping air.

Bob shot his brake home and brought the car to a stop at the roadside.

"Guess we got a flat, Joe."

"Sounds like it," admitted his friend.

The right hand rear tire was settling fast, and from it they saw protruding a large nail.

While Bob jacked it up Joe stood looking off into the valley spread far below them.

"Is that the place there?" He indicated the verdant spot in the valley below them.

"That's it, and it's a hot hustling place now for a couple months. They have planted heavier this year, get good prices. Funny you never heard of it."

"Never did," admitted Joe. "What's this streak of rust here? Don't look much like a main line."

"It is though, all the main they got. That's the Los Lunas & Northern," said Bob.

Then they changed tires and got in the car.

"Tell me more about this little railroad, Bob," asked Joe.

"Well, it's just a hundred miles long. It starts down here in the low valley. It goes north to Dayton, where it connects with the Q. & S. The grade southward is mostly downhill the last sixty miles, but it takes two of their old time engines to haul twelve loaded cars back to the main line."

"They got steam power, then?"

"Sure, three old time kettles that the promoters left them. You see, the fellows that started this valley were Easterners. They sold the land to the farmers—ranchers—and built the railroad because the Q. & S. wouldn't build in. But last two years they've rolled out over two thousand cars of lettuce and melons, besides cars of alfalfa and stock, and the Q. & S. are trying to buy it now.

"The ranchers got stuck with the stock the promoters unloaded on them, but it's paying now, and they don't want to sell. Afraid the Q. & S. might junk the line."

"But their engines?" Joe asked again. "Who runs them? Do they keep them up the year 'round, or just that motor car?"

"They use the engines only in lettuce and cantaloupe seasons, or when they have a couple cars alfalfa, meal or stock to take up, probably once a week. But when the season's open, them jacks are mostly too small, and they rent engines from the Q. & S. It also fur-

nishes train and engine crews, and sends a dispatcher down here."

II

THEIR casual talk brought them into town. They parked in front of the new court house.

All around them was a beehive of activity. The little city was a mass of angry men.

"What's wrong here now?" Joe asked.

"Dunno, let's light and amble about," Bob suggested, and made his way to the restaurant where he usually held out. For the past five years he had come here for the lettuce and melon seasons, and had run the shed of the Franklin Packing Company. Franklin was also president of the Los Lunas & Northern and the local bank.

"Hello, Bob," the cheery greeting came from the restaurant owner.

"'Lo, Jerry. What's eatin' this village today?" Bob asked.

"You no hear? The big road say will no furnish any more engines or cars to move the melons out 'less the people here sell them the little road. Melons about ready to go and they are powerful mad."

"Makes our job look like a bust, don't it?" Joe queried of Bob.

"Might at that; let's eat and go over to the court house; they will be in there squabbling."

Finishing eating, they pushed their way through to the court house. Frequent greetings came Bob's way. He was known to every rancher in the valley.

Inside they eased along the side closer to the front end. On the platform a tall gray-headed, robust man was talking to others, who were all talking at once.

They had been tricked, defrauded and mocked by the powerful transcontinental line, the Q. & S. Its attorneys were down there with papers, offering half price for the stock. Half for stock that was paying excellent dividends! The attorneys were stalling, explaining that the Q. & S. would have to relay the tracks, install more yard facilities, etc.

"Like hell you will!" An angry bull-necked rancher was on his feet, shaking his arms and gesticulating at the men on the platform. "You just want to tear up this track and put on busses. Bust our valley up, that's what. Want us to quit so them other bigger valleys can raise all the stuff."

A shout of approval went up.

The railroad attorney tried to answer, but the uproar was too much. Franklin held up his hand.

"Everybody come back at seven tonight. We will have some plan ready."

The room slowly emptied. Franklin, spying Bob leaning against the window, signalled to him.

"Mighty glad you came, Bob," he said. "Things look awful tough here for our melons. We stand to lose a million dollar crop."

"Pretty tough," admitted Bob. "Meet Joe Versty, here; he's an old railroad train dispatcher; maybe he can put out the right kind of orders to get it moving."

"Might at that," Franklin replied as his keen eye ran over Joe appraisingly. "That reminds me, Bob, ain't you an engineer?"

"Was."

"Come along over to the bank."

Inside the offices of the bank, with the vice-president and the railroad's attorney, Franklin started in.

"Bob, we've got three engines. Two are O. K. One needs some overhauling. There's lots of ex-railroad men among

the fruit tramps. Now, can't you rig up a crew and move this stuff?"

"I might," Bob spoke slowly. "Joe, here, as I said, is an old dispatcher, Chris Swanson is an ex-conductor. Charley Watts and Matt Hurley are both young engineers, cut off the U. P. There's another telegrapher I know of who's coming if he's not already in, and there are several brakemen and switchmen, and maybe a couple car toads and shop men."

"Look into it right away!" urged Franklin. "And let me know as soon as possible."

"Looks like we got us a job a railroading again—maybe," Joe remarked as they passed out to the street.

They had no trouble lining up three engineers and full train and engine crews. With two shop mechanics he went to the roundhouse, where they looked over the small power.

"Take two days to put this one out, Bob; the others are probably all right," the machinist told him after an inspection of the engine with the side rods down.

"All right, now listen. I don't know what's going to come of it, but you tell all the boys to meet me at the shed at seven-thirty or eight tonight. The melons are ripening, if they do anything here they will have to move, and so will we if we take the job over."

"Suits me fine, Bob; I don't especially care to go to railroading again; I make more loading cars. But the excitement will be like old times."

At five Bob and Joe told Franklin they could recruit a full force with the exception of section hands. Franklin brushed that aside easily.

"I've got a hundred Mexicans on the ranches here. Can put them on the track. What we need is skill right now."

At seven that evening Franklin explained the plan to the assembled ranchers. They cheered and gathered around Bob and Joe, offering any help they needed. They wanted to keep their railroad—not sell it for a song.

III

From eight o'clock on Joe was busy in the dispatcher's office cleaning up, taking names of the volunteer railroaders, and cutting the wires in from the agent's office downstairs to his desk.

In the shops, engines were fired up and run short distances on the main to break in the engineers who were to handle the small, out-of-date power. Car and shop men were working briskly assembling No. 30, which was down.

At 1 A.M. Joe gave Bob the orders for 25, which was to run extra, Los Lunas to Dayton and return. They hooked on the old coach, and Bob called the train and engine crews to come on and learn the road on one trip. Slowly they moved out of Los Lunas, one car filled with fruit tramps behind the old engine.

At 7 A.M. Charley Watts brought the short train to a stop at the wye at Dayton. They backed around and headed the equipment southward, cut the coach off on the wye, and backed to the joint water tank on the transfer track.

"What about some empties, boy?" Bob's question was shot at the startled Q. & S. operator, who was dumfounded to see a train from Los Lunas filled with defiant men.

"Haven't any authority to deliver you any," he replied.

"Ask the dispatcher; tell him we are here and want twenty empties."

The operator turned to his phones. While he was talking Bob stepped out and signaled the brakeman to come there. Down the long storage tracks

were long lines of refrigerator cars waiting for the melon rush.

"The dispatcher says no empties are to be delivered, General Manager's orders," the operator told him as he entered.

"Let's see your timecard," Bob asked.

Silently the operator handed it over. Bob studied it, crunched it in his hand, and walked back to the group of men waiting in the shade of the tank.

As far as he could see there was nothing but burning desolation—except a house for the operator pumper, a boarded-up tower used in palmier days, three streaks of shining, hot ribbons of steel.

Bob went to the operator again.

"Let's have your switch key," he ordered.

"No you don't, none of that."

"Take it easy, Bud, set down." Mose gave him a gentle push into his chair and seated himself on the table in front of the phones. Bob eased out, with the large ring and key in his hand. Two short toots, and the engine rolled through the opened switches and followed the flagman down the narrow stretch of main to the storage tracks.

Five minutes later the little jack was snorting and slipping, dragging twenty of the empty reefers back into the interchange tracks on to the L. L. & N. main. Mose caught the key and tossed it on the desk as Bob threw it, then followed him out.

At the wye they backed on to the coach and sped back toward Los Lunas.

Through the winding, twisting canyons the little engine spurted smoke and noise. Then came the long easy grade down into the bottom of the desert.

At 2 P.M. they rolled into town. The tramps divided the empties for the three sheds and moved off toward the restaurants.

IV

Joe's wire grew hot and fairly radiated sulphur and brimstone from the Q. & S. general offices, who demanded to know why the L. L. & N. had stolen twenty cars from them.

Joe chewed tobacco nonchalantly. Franklin came in and read the messages, grunted uncomplimentary words about the Q. & S. and went out. Bob tossed them aside and made his way to the roundhouse.

Joe looked out the east window to the barren desert beyond. He stretched his feet on the table and wished he might go back over to the shed, where the boys were busy unloading, sorting, and rapidly packing the honeydews.

He looked up as the road's one agent-auditor breathlessly entered.

"Say, Joe, there's a car of Q. & S. people downstairs—old man Sanders, the G. M. from Junction City, and a couple bulls."

"Well, keep out of the way down there; I may decide to chuck 'em downstairs."

"There'll be hell to pay. Where's Bob? Did he answer them messages?"

"Not a one yet—been laying there since yesterday," he replied, pointing to Bob's littered desk.

Loud shuffling steps sounded outside; the door slammed open; and three big men filed into the room. The agent faded out behind them.

"Who's running this place?" the fat man among them roared.

"Who in hell wants to know?" Joe answered, recognizing the two with Sanders as railroad dicks. He hated officials, but he hated bulls worse.

"I do—I am Mister Sanders of the Q. & S."

"Yah? Why didn't you say so before, and besides what makes you think I care?"

Sanders was taken aback. The cold eyes of the dispatcher, watching his every move, disconcerted him. The two bulls accompanying him did not take the warning; they were used to browbeating employees. One of them brushed by Sanders and sneered in Joe's face.

"Don't get so hard, bud, er—"

Joe's hard right crashed his jaw and his left swung in.

The bull leaned over, gently brushed a chair and came to rest alongside the table on the floor. Joe made a pass for the other one, but came up looking into an automatic.

"What's wrong here?"

Cold snappy words came from the doorway. The bull turned to look into the business end of Bob's forty-five, pointed directly at his middle. He released his gun and dropped it on the table. Joe snapped it up. Sanders dropped into a chair and mopped his forehead.

"Er, I just wanted to know who was running this place," he stuttered to Bob.

Bob pocketed his gun, ignoring the dick.

He grinned at Sanders, "found out, didn't yuh?"

"But—where's Franklin?" Sanders asked.

"I don't know; maybe at the bank," Bob replied.

"Who's in charge here?"

"Me—us," grinned Bob, indicating Joe and himself.

"I came to find out why you stole our cars."

"Never stole your cars; they are property of the reefer company. We pay for them, same as you do. We need them, and are going to load them."

"We won't accept them for movement," screamed the angry Sanders.

"Oh, yes, you will. The State Service Commission will see to that, and the buyers will wire their houses, who will see to that—and another thing, Mister, we don't want any more monkey business from you. Try it again and your company will need a new supply of yellow-legged bulls and a brass hat." Sanders arose.

"I'll see Franklin about this," he sputtered, moving out.

"Better keep away from these ranchers; you'll need more bodyguards than them two if they recognize you."

V

General Manager Sanders' interview with Mr. Franklin was anything but nice. Franklin, an old ex-cowman, hard-shooting and hard-swearing, backed Joe's action and offered to complete what Joe had started if Sanders didn't like it. The general manager's car left from in front of the bank with many hoots from the village following it.

Back at Junction City Sanders wired the details to the vice-president, who was in immediate charge, and who had handled the matter all through. Then he washed his hands of it.

That night Numbers 25 and 26 moved out of Los Lunas with twelve cars of cantaloupes. Each buyer had wired the numbers to his eastern house, and the houses were urged to wire the railroads. The Q. & S. competed too heavily with the Santa Anna lines for business back in the big valleys. They couldn't ignore the commission houses. They moved the cars promptly and delivered the L. L. & N. engines a full train of empties.

"We will pick them up; we can't help ourselves with the freight department behind us—but—" Vice-president Hale, who had come to Junction City in his private car, whispered something into Sanders' ear. The G. M. looked carefully about and nodded.

Two days later Charley Watts and Chris Swanson, the conductor, took No. 30 to Dayton on a trial run. They were to bring back a car of fuel oil and a car of merchandise. Late that evening the operator handed him his return orders. He was to meet Nos. 25 and 26, a doubleheader, at Hyde, five miles north of the hills and canyons.

It was nearly dark when they slowed down for the switch at Hyde. The brakeman ran ahead to open it, but halted as a voice called to him from the bushes. He found himself covered by a shotgun.

"Put 'em up, boy." The brakeman complied. Other bandits emerged from the bushes. Then Chris alighted from the cab and raised his hands as he backed up against the train.

"A holdup," gasped Charley Watts, as he swung around to see the armed man training a gun at him from the ground.

"Yea — a holdup. Climb down, buddy, and be pronto." Charley obeyed. Seven masked men marched them back a quarter mile into the bushes, where they trussed them up and stuffed waste in their mouths. Cautioning them to lie quiet, they moved away.

As they left Charley gasped. A sharp mesquite thorn caught the mask of one of them and pulled it off. He recognized the dick who was in Los Lunas a week before! The man caught up the mask and shoved it in his pocket and rushed off.

They heard the rush of steam, the slipping of drivers, as though an uncertain hand were at the throttle, then the sharp cutoffs as the train moved away. From the track several automobiles roared off in the direction of Dayton.

Chris managed to free his hands, for the ropes that bound him were loose. Quickly he freed himself and the others.

They all rushed toward the track, but for miles in each direction the desert was bare of life.

"Them fools will go into that doubleheader, sure as shootin'!" Chris cried and they started walking rapidly down the track in the distance the train had gone.

Darkness set in, for the desert has short twilight. Talking excitedly, they pushed southward. Then from across the desert stillness came the wild sound of a locomotive whistle. Like a frightened animal it screamed its warning, roared, shrieked. Then over the hills echoed a lengthy, rending crash.

They stared at each other and rushed wildly toward the south.

VI

Before all this happened Nos. 25 and 26, with their cars of fruit, were working hard to make the run from the valley to the mountain canyon region. Bob Hays was in the cab of the head engine.

He widened on the throttle. They roared through the gorge ahead. The vegetation was growing more sparse, but the ever-present cholla was lying in silvery patches everywhere. The headlight lit up the weird, ghostly Joshua trees.

Through the night they roared, the echoes of the exhaust reflected in the hills and disappearing among the many cliffs and peaks. In the cab the lights from slots on the boiler head cast a warm glow over the men.

As they rounded a curve, a single solitary crucifixion tree loomed in the headlight—hard, rigid and repellent, every branch and twig a spiny thorn.

Bob pulled his cap lower over his eyes and leaned out the window. Suddenly, from around a canyon wall, a light mingled with that of his engine. He shoved the throttle home and pulled the whistle cord. Then from around the steep walls a headlight leaped at him. Throwing the reverse lever back, he jumped through the window. Before he touched the ground there came a rending, grinding roar as steel met steel. It reverberated throughout the narrow canyon. Then silence.

As soon as he could Bob made his way to the locked locomotives. Just then one of the brakemen and the conductor came up, unhurt. The fireman also joined them, holding tight a broken arm. The other brakeman they found in the wreckage, scalded and badly hurt. He was done for. The engine crew on No. 26 were unhurt.

Bewildered, they examined the southbound No. 30. Her fire was burning low, her water was low, but there was no one aboard. They wasted no time, however, and found that No. 26, second engine of the doubleheader, was practically undamaged. They uncoupled her from No. 25, put her pony truck wheels back on the track.

The doubleheader had been running slowly, and was practically stopped by the time it had met No. 30. No. 25 had taken most of the shock, and luckily all the cars back of No. 26 remained on the tracks. They backed it and the cars to an old siding.

"We can't go ahead, men, that's certain," Bob said. "Matty," he turned to his flagman, the other telegrapher in the crowd. "Set your portable set up and get hold of Joe."

From the caboose they took out the old box relay and key, and made the connections.

"It's all right," he said as his fingers moved swiftly at the key, calling DS.

"WO—who?" The reply came from Joe's heavy hand.

"This is Matty—we hit No. 30 here in the canyon, about five miles south of Hyde." He followed with a description of the wreck, the injured and the dead.

"Is Bob there?"

"Yes."

"Ask him how he figures I am going to send up a wrecker with all three engines piled up there?"

Matty conferred with Bob.

"Tell him to get Franklin, to line up a wrecking crew and section men, rails, ties, and we will send the twenty-six back for it."

"O. K.," Joe clicked back.

"I wonder what the hell became of that crew?" Bob asked Matty as they again walked around the 30 and its short train.

Then, coming down the tracks from the north, they heard voices, and men running and stumbling in the darkness.

Bob recognized Charley's voice and called to him. Tired and out of breath, they stumbled up. After telling Bob what they knew, they went around the wreck, then to the box relay.

"Ask him if Franklin's there," Bob told Matty.

Joe quickly replied that he was.

Swiftly Bob wrote the account of the holdup and the description of the bull that Charley had recognized. As he finished a sheet at a time Matty transmitted it to Joe.

"Franklin's here, reading it now," Joe told them.

They smoked in silence a few seconds. Suddenly they heard the faint

click of the sounder, "WK—WK—WK—DS."

"I—I—" Matty answered.

"Franklin says for Bob to handle the clean up, to get everything ready here for the wrecker. He won't be on the wrecker now; going with the sheriff and get those fellows."

VII

WHEN Franklin got the news about the wreck he took the message and drove his car directly to the sheriff's home. Then to his office, where Franklin selected several names from the telephone list and called them. A few minutes later ten stern-faced men stood before the sheriff and held up their hands for the deputy's oath.

All packing guns, they got into three swift cars, and sped northward through the still desert night.

Dawn was breaking as they stopped at the place Bob had described as the scene of the holdup. The dull sky slowly brightened as they searched the ground and examined the tire treads in the soft soil. A sudden yellow flare lit up the east—then the blood-red tip of the sun. Across the wastelands it shot a broad level beam. It turned the sand mounds about them a molten gold color, and the boundless waste was quickly wrested from the night. They sped quickly toward Dayton.

At Division City, 40 miles west of Dayton, they drove direct to the division offices of the Q. & S. Pushing past inquisitive office boys and clerks, Franklin and the sheriff entered Sanders' private office.

"What's this?" Sanders asked angrily as they strode into the room.

"I've a warrant for you, that's all." The sheriff of Los Lunas answered.

"A warrant! What for?" Sanders asked as he lost his haughty manner.

"Murder," the sheriff replied curtly.

"Franklin, what does he mean?" screamed the official.

"It's murder all right, Sanders," Franklin's voice was tense. "Them bulls of yours kidnapped our crew and turned a train loose, a doubleheader hit it, a man was killed, property damaged, several hurt."

"Hit a doubleheader!" dully repeated Sanders.

"Yea—come on, let's go." The sheriff laid his hand forcibly on his arm.

"Go! Where?" Sanders cried.

"Los Lunas jail," Franklin said.

"Oh! Not that! Think of my position—my family!" Sanders pleaded with them.

"Think, hell— What about our men's families, the dead man's family —all our ranchers' families?"

"But I had nothing to do with it," he pleaded. "I tell you it wasn't my orders."

"Whose order was it then?" Franklin asked.

"Mr. Hale—er—handles that business." Sanders stumbled over his words.

Franklin moved to the outer office, where he signaled a waiting rancher.

"Harry, stay here with him till we come back; don't let anyone in here."

Turning with the sheriff, they made their way out. On the stairs they ran into the two bulls who had accompanied Sanders to Los Lunas. Franklin recognized them instantly.

"Them's the two," he cried to the sheriff, and called them to halt.

They started to back down hastily.

"Hold on, there," the sheriff's voice and gun boomed together. They only quickened their pace. Franklin leaped upon the sliding bannister and halfway down leaped from it to the hall

below, directly in front of the running men. He grabbed them both by the neck and held them tight.

The sheriff slipped the handcuffs on them both.

Franklin led the way out.

"Down here's the car," he said as he nodded in the direction of a private railroad car parked below the long platform, and strode swiftly toward it.

The tall wiry, gray-headed vice-president arose to meet him. Beads of sweat formed on his brow as he noted Franklin's gun and the sheriff's star.

"I want you, Hale, and for the murder too." Franklin wasted no words. Before he had finished the sheriff's handcuffs had clicked over the wrists of the elegant vice-president of the Q. & S. railroad. A secretary leaped to his feet, protesting. Franklin kicked him into another compartment.

"Take him to the car, I'll be with you in a minute," Franklin said as he joined the ranchers holding the bull.

Protesting and blubbering, the great general manager was led and roughly pushed into a waiting auto. The three cars sped swiftly toward Los Lunas and home.

VIII

NEXT day the company's attorneys tried to free the men, but Franklin and the county judge exhibited such an array of evidence that they were alarmed. Sanders had talked and talked plenty. Hale owned considerable land in the upper valleys, and he wanted to strangle the little valley below. The attorneys returned to Junction City and wired their report to the general counsel.

Late that night the wrecker came in. The tracks were clear, the 30 and 26 were working, but the 25 was badly shot.

Delighted, Franklin heard Charley Watts identify one of the bulls as the one whose mask had fallen off. Hale was held for trial.

Two days later a large touring car stopped before the bank. From it alighted a small, alert man. He made his way to Franklin's private office. He was Mr. Wharton, president of the Q. & S.

For an hour they talked, then Franklin called in the L. L. & N. attorney and Bob Hays.

At the court house that evening, Wharton attending, Franklin and the railroad lawyer told the people that at last the Q. & S. offered par for their stock, and that they had signed a contract to continue the operation efficiently, with one daily round trip steam train to Dayton.

"And, men," continued Franklin, "they will keep crews here in our town, just as they are today. Bob Hays stays as trainmaster on this district, Joe Versty as dispatcher, all the rest of the men hold the runs. No main line men will be used here."

So the fruit tramps stayed on the railroad.

RAILROAD LINGO

FROM time to time readers have asked us to publish an inclusive dictionary of words used by railroad men. A few years ago we printed a large vocabulary which we followed by several supplements. Since then we have dug up new words, received letters from readers telling of little-known words, and we are now publishing this compact dictionary of the railroad language.

We have left out a few which appeared in former lists because they did not apply exclusively enough to railroading. But we have added many more. Perhaps there are some we haven't yet heard of. If you know of any, don't hesitate to write and let us hear about them.

AGE—Seniority, length of time in service; also called whiskers
AIR MONKEY—Air brake repairman
ALLEY—Clear track in yard
ANCHOR THEM—Set hand brakes on still cars
ARMSTRONG—Engine not equipped with stoker
ARTIST—One who is particularly adept (usually with such prefix as brake, pin, speed, etc.)
BABY LIFTER—Passenger brakeman
BAKEHEAD, BELL RINGER, BLACKIE—Locomotive fireman
BATTLESHIP—Locomotive, generally a large one
BEANERY—Railroad eating house
BEE HIVE—Yard office
BEND THE IRON, BEND THE RUST, BEND THE RAIL—Change the position of a switch
BENNY—Short overcoat
BIG HOLE—Emergency position of air brake valve, causing a quick stop
BIG HOOK—Wrecking crane
BIG OX—Freight conductor
BINDER—Hand brake
BLACK DIAMONDS—Company coal
BLACK SNAKE—Solid train of coal
BLAZER—Hot journal with packing afire
BLEED—To drain air from
BLEEDER—Valve by which bleeding is done
BLOW UP—To quit a job suddenly
BLOW SMOKE—To brag
BOOKKEEPER—Flagman
BOARD—A fixed signal regulating railroad traffic; usually referred to as slow board, order board, clear board (for clear tracks), or red board (stop)
BOOMER—Drifter who goes from one railroad job to another, staying a short time on each road. The term dates from pioneer days when men followed boom camps
BOUNCER, BED HOUSE—Caboose
BRAIN PLATE—Trainman's badge
BRAINLESS WONDER—Conductor, engineer, fireman or any official who does queer things, in the opinion of his fellows
BRAINS—Conductor
BRASS COLLAR, BRASS HAT—An official
BRASS POUNDER—Telegraph operator
BREEZE—Air
BROWNIES—Demerit marks; named after the man who invented the system
BROWNIE BOX—Superintendent's car
BUGGY—Caboose, passenger car or box car
BUG TORCH—Trainman's lantern
BULL—Railroad police officer
BULLGINE—Steam locomotive

BUMP—To secure another man's position by exercising seniority
BUMPER—A post at the end of spur track
CAGE—Caboose
CALLER—Employee whose duty it is to summon train or engine crews
CALLIOPE—Steam locomotive
CAPTAIN—A term applied to conductor, either passenger or freight
CARRY A WHITE FEATHER—To show a plume of steam over the safety valves
CAR TOAD—Car repairer; also car tonk, car whack, etc.
CAR KNOCKER—Car inspector
CHAIN GANG—Crews which are assigned extra runs; also construction crews
CHARIOT—Sometimes passenger car, but mostly caboose
CHASE THE RED—To go back with red flag or red light to protect a train
CHERRY PICKER—Switch tender
CHEW CINDERS—Engines do this when reversed while running and while working quite a bit of steam
CINDER CRUNCHER—A switchman
CINDER SNAPPER—Passenger who rides the platform on observation cars
CLOWN, CLUB WINDER—Switchman or brakeman
CLOWN WAGON, CRIB, CRUMMY, CRUMB BOX—Caboose
CLUB—Hickory pole about three feet long carried by freight trainmen to help set hand brakes
COCK LOFT—Caboose cupola
COONING THE TRAIN—Go over the tops of cars
CORNER—To strike a car not in the clear on a siding
CORNFIELD MEET—Head on meet with both trains trying to use the same main track
COW CAGE—Stock car
CRIPPLE—A car that needs repairs
CROWNING HIM—Coupling a caboose on a train when it is made up
CUPOLA—The observation tower on a caboose, also called crow's nest
CUSHIONS—Passenger cars
CUT—A few cars attached to the engine; several cars coupled together anywhere
DANCING ON THE CARPET—In an official's office for investigation or discipline
DEADHEAD—Employee riding on company pass on company business; fireman's derisive term for brakeman
DECK—Floor of locomotive cab; also roofs of box cars
DECORATE—Getting out on top of freight cars to set hand brakes
DETAINER—Train dispatcher
DIAMOND—Crossover
DIAMOND CRACKER—Fireman
DICK—Railroad detective
DIE GAME—To stall on a hill
DINGER—Yardmaster or assistant yardmaster
DOG CATCHERS—Crew sent to relieve another which has been overtaken by the sixteen-hour law
DOG HOUSE—Caboose
DONKEYS—Section men
DOLLY—Switch stand
DOLLY FLAPPER—Switch tender
DONICKER—Freight brakeman
DOPE—Orders, official instructions; also composition for cooling hot journals
DOUBLE HEADER—Train hauled by two engines
DOUSE THE GLIM—To extinguish a lantern by a sudden upward movement
DOUBLE—In going up a hill, to cut the train in half and take each section up separately
DRAG—Heavy train of dead freight; any kind of slow freight train
DRAWBAR FLAGGING—Leaning up against the drawbar of the caboose to protect the rear end of a train instead of walking back a safe distance
DRILL CREW—Yard crew
DRINK—Water for locomotive
DRONE CAGE—Private car
DROP—A switching movement in which cars are cut off from an engine and allowed to coast to their places
DROPPER—Car rider on hump
DRUMMER—Yard conductor
DYNAMITER—A car on which a defective air mechanism sends the brakes into full emergency when only a service application is made by engineer
EAGLE-EYE—Locomotive engineer
END MAN—Rear brakeman on freight train
EYE—Signal
FAMILY DISTURBER—Pay car
FIELD—Yard
FIRST READER—Conductor's train book
FIST—Operator's handwriting
FLAG—An assumed name
FLAT WHEEL—A wheel with flat spots on the tread; also an employee who walks lame or limps
FLIMSY—Train order
FLYING SWITCH—See drop or high-daddy
FLY LIGHT—Miss a meal
FOG—Steam
FOOTBOARD—The step on the front and rear ends of switch or freight engines
FREEZE THE HUB—Cool a heated journal
FROG—Implement for rerailing wheels; also X-shaped plate where one track crosses another
GALVANIZER—Car inspector
GANDY DANCER—Track laborer

GANGWAY—Space between rear cab post of locomotive and tender
GARDEN—Freight yard
GATE—Switch
GENERAL—Yardmaster
GLIM—Switchman's lantern
GLORY—String of empties; death by accident
GOAT—Yard engine
GO HIGH—To climb to the top of box cars to receive or transmit signals or apply hand brakes
G. M.—General manager
G. Y. M.—General yardmaster
GON—A gondola or steel-sided, flat bottom coal car
GRABBER—Conductor
GRAVEYARD WATCH — 12.01 A.M to 8 A.M.; any midnight shift
GRUNT—Engineer
GREASY SPOON—Railroad eating house
GREASE MONK—Car oiler
GREEN BACKS—Frogs for rerailing cars or engines
GROUNDHOG—Brakeman
GUN—Torpedo; the injector which forces water from tank to boiler or locomotive
GUT—Air hose
HACK, HAY WAGON, HEARSE—Caboose
HAM—A student or otherwise poor telegraph operator
HARNESS—Passenger conductor's uniform
HAY—Overtime; sleep on the job; any kind of sleep
HAY-BURNER—Hand oil lantern; inspection torch
HEAD MAN, HEAD PIN—The brakeman who, on freight trains, rides engine
HEEL—Cars on end of track, with brakes applied
HERDER—Man who couples engines on and takes them off on the arrival and departure of trains
HIGHBALL—Signal waved by the hand or by lamp in a high, wide semi-circle, meaning, to come ahead at high speed. Word originated from old-time ball signal on post. It was raised by pulley when track was clear
HIGHBALL ARTIST—A locomotive engineer noted for fast running
HIGH-DADDY or HI-DADDY — Flying switch in which cars are cut off behind the engine and switch is thrown after engine has passed
HIGH IRON—Main line or high speed track
HIGHLINER—Main line fast passenger train
HIGH-WHEELER — Passenger locomotive; fast passenger train; highball artist
HITTING THE GRIT OR GRAVEL—Falling off or getting kicked off a car
HOG—Locomotive, formerly only Consolidation type
HOGGER, HOGHEAD—Locomotive engineer
HOG LAW—Federal statute providing that all train and engine crews tie up after 16 hours of continuous service; also called dog law
HOLE—Side track where one train pulls in to meet another
HOME GUARD—Employee who stays with one railroad, as contrasted with boomer
HOOK—Wrecking crane or auxiliary
HOPPER—A steel-sided coal car with a bottom which allows unloading through it
HOPTOAD—Derail
HORSE 'ER OVER—To throw over the reverse lever
HOT—With plenty of steam pressure (applied to locomotive)
HOT BOX—Overheated journal or bearing
HOT SHOT—Fast train of any class
HUMP—Artificial knoll at end of classification yard over which cars are pushed and allowed to roll to separate tracks on their own momentum
HUMPBACK JOB—One on a peddler freight
HUT—Caboose; sometimes cab of a locomotive
INDIAN VALLEY R. R.—An imaginary line where one could always get a good job. It does not refer to the 21-mile road in California between Paxton and Engels
IRON SKULL—Boilermaker
JACK—Locomotive
JAM BUSTER—Assistant yardmaster
JAY-ROD—Clinker hook
JEWEL—Journal brass
JERK SOUP, JERK A DRINK—To take water from a track pan without stopping
JERRY—Section foreman
JIGGER—Full tonnage train of dead freight
JOHNSON BAR—Reverse lever on a locomotive
JUGGLER—Member of way freight crew who must load and unload less-than-carload freight at station stops
KEELEY—Water can for hot or heated journals
KETTLE—Locomotive
KICK—See drop
KICKER—Triple valve that sticks and throws brakes into emergency with application of air and sometimes by a bump of the train
KING—Freight conductor; sometimes applied to yardmaster
KING SNIPE—Foreman of track gang
KNOWLEDGE BOX—Yardmaster's office
LADDER, LEAD—Main track of a yard. From it each individual track leads off
LETTERS—Service certificates
LIGHTNING SLINGER—Telegraph operator
LINER—Passenger train

LIZARD SCORCHER—Cook
LOUSE CAGE—Caboose
LUNG—Drawbar
MAIN IRON, MAIN STEM—Main track
MAIN PIN, MASTER MIND—An official
MANIFEST—Fast freight, usually made up of merchandise and perishables
MARKER—Rear end signal
MASTER MANIAC—Master mechanic
MOONLIGHT MASTER MECHANIC—Night roundhouse foreman
MEAL BOOK—Pie card or grazing ticket
MILL—Steam locomotive; typewriter
MODOC—Employees' train
MONKEY—Brakeman on hump riding cars
MONKEY HOUSE—Caboose
MONKEY MOTION—Walschaert and Baker valve gears on locomotive
MTYS—Empty cars
MUD CHICKEN—Surveyor
MUDHOP—Yard clerk
NIGGERHEAD—Steam exit on top of boiler from which pipes to injector, etc., issue
NO-BILL, NON-AIR—A non-union railroad worker
NOSE ON—Couple on with head end of engine
NUMBER DUMMY, NUMBER GRABBER—Yard or car clerk
NUT SPLITTER, NUT BUSTER—Machinist
OLD MAN—Superintendent
OP—Telegraph operator
O. R. C.—Conductor, member of the Order of Railway Conductors
ORNAMENT—Stationmaster
O. S.—To report a train by a station to the dispatcher
OUTLAWED—Applied to a crew that has worked 16 hours, the limit allowed by law
PADDLE—Semaphore signal
PALACE, PARLOR—Caboose
PATTING HER ON THE BACK—Hooking up the reverse lever as speed is attained
PARLOR MAID—The hind brakeman or flagman on a freight train
PEDDLER—Local way freight
PECK—20 minutes allowed for lunch
PIG—Locomotive
PIG MAULER—Locomotive engineer
PIG-PEN—Roundhouse
PIKE—Railroad
PIN—Sometimes a brakeman
PIN AHEAD AND PICK UP TWO BEHIND ONE—Cut off the engine and pick up three cars from the siding, put two on the train, and set the first one back on the siding
PIN FOR HOME—To go home for the day; see "Pull the pin"
PINHEAD—Brakeman
PINK—Caution card
PINNER—Switchman that follows
PIN-PULLER—Switchman who cuts off the cars
PLUG—One-horse passenger train; also, in old days, the throttle; hence engineers were called "plug pullers"
POUNDING HER—Working locomotive to capacity, regardless of grade, etc.
POSSUM BELLY—Tool box under caboose
POUND THEIR EARS—Sleep on the job, also any kind of sleep
PULL THE PIN—To uncouple a car by pulling up the coupling pin, hence to resign or quit a job
PUTTY—Steam
RABBIT—Derail
RAIL—Railroad employee
RATTLER—Freight train
RAWHIDER—Conductor or engineer or any official who is especially hard on men and equipment
REAL ESTATE—Poor coal
RED BALL—Fast freight
RED ONION—Railroad eating house
REEFER—Refrigerator car
RINGMASTER—Yardmaster
RIP TRACK—Minor car repair track
ROOF GARDEN, SACRED OX—Mallet locomotive, or helper on a mountain job
RUBBERNECK CAR—Observation car
RULE G—Thou shalt not drink
SALOON, SHANTY—Caboose
SCISSOR-BILL or SIZZER-BILL—Yard or road brakeman; not complimentary
SCOOP—Fireman's shovel; step on front and rear end of switch engines
SEASHORE—Sand
SECRET WORKS—Automatic air brake application
SHACK, STINGER—Brakeman
SHINER—Trainman's lantern
SHINING TIME—Starting time
SHORTS—Cars left between stations
SHUFFLE THE DECK—To switch cars on house tracks at every station
SHUNTING BOILER—Switch engine
SHUT-EYE—Sleep
SIDE-DOOR PULLMAN—Box car used by bum stealing a ride
SKIPPER—Conductor
SLAVE DRIVER—Yardmaster; any rawhiding official
SLUG—Heavy fire in locomotive firebox
SMART ALEC—Conductor
SMOKE, SMOKE AGENT—Fireman
SMOKER—Locomotive
SMOKING 'EM—A method of getting from one station to another without orders, moving along slowly and watching for the smoke of an approaching train. Dangerous, but sometimes done in the old days. Also called running on smoke orders

SNAKE—Switchman
SNIPE—Track laborer
SNOOZER—Pullman car
SOFT-BELLIES—Wooden frame cars
SPAR—Pole used to shove cars into the clear when switching
SPEEDY—Call boy
SPOT—To place a car or engine in a designated position; also sleep or lunch period or rest on the company's time. "On the spot" means an opportunity for a group of railroad men to "chew the rag" or swap experiences
SPOTTER—Man assigned to snoop around to check up on conduct of employees
STAB—Delay
STAR-GAZERS—Brakemen who fail to see signals
STICK—Staff used on certain stretches of track to control the block. It is carried by engine crews from one station to another
STEM-WINDER—Climax type geared engine
STOPPER PULLER—Member of the crew that follows the engine in switching
STRAWBERRY PATCH—Rear end of caboose by night
STRING—Cut of cars; several cars coupled together
STRINGS—Telegraph wires
SUCK IT BY—Make a flying switch
SWELL HEAD—Conductor
TALLOWPOT—Locomotive fireman
TAKING HER BY THE NECK—Phrase used to describe an engine pulling a drag up a grade
TANK—Locomotive tender
TEAKETTLE—Leaky, old locomotive; any small engine
THOUSAND-MILER—Starched blue shirt worn by railroad men, especially boomers
TIE 'EM DOWN—To set hand brakes
TOAD—Derailer
TO GET THE ROCKING CHAIR—To be retired on pension
TOEPATH—Running board
TOP DRESSER DRAWER—Upper bunk in caboose
TRAIN LINE—Pipe that carries compressed air to operate the air brakes
TRAVELING GRUNT—Road foreman of engines
TRAVELING MAN—Traveling engineer or fireman
TRICK—Shift, hours of duty
UNDERGROUND HOG—Chief engineer
VARNISHED WAGONS—Passenger coaches, especially wooden ones
WALK UP AGAINST THE GUN—Go up a stiff grade with the injector on
WABASH—To corner cars going into adjacent tracks
WAGONS—See buggies
WASHOUT—Violent stop signal made by waving both arms in a downward arc by day; and swinging a lamp in a wide, low semi-circle across the tracks by night
WAY-CAR—Caboose
WHALE BELLY—Steel car, or type of coal car
WHISKERS—Age or seniority
WHISTLE PIG—Engineer
WILLIE—Waybill for load car
WING HER—Set the brakes on a moving train
WYE—Tracks running off main line or lead, forming letter "Y"; used to turn cars or engines where there is no turntable
YARD—System of tracks for making trains or storing cars. (Boomer's version: "System of tracks surrounded by a fence and run and inhabited by a bunch of natives who will not let a train in or out")
YARD GEESE—Yard switchmen
Y. M.—Yardmaster
ZULU—Emigrant outfit traveling by rail

Waverly, N. Y., Station on the Old Erie R. R., 80 Years Ago

Railroad Rimes

THE recent abandonment of the Sandy River line inspired Charles G. Wilson, of Kingfield, Me., to write "Rollin' over Jordan" as a sequel to his "Rollin' into Kingfield."

ROLLIN' OVER JORDAN

THEY'VE drawn the boiler fire, the engine's cold and gray;
Grass grows deep as shadows creep on the lonely right-of-way;
The throbbin' pulse of pistons is hushed and forever still,
And Maine woods hear no longer the whistle's whippoorwill.

No more with throttle open wide will she defy the grade
Along the trail of iron rail our fathers' fathers laid;
No more she'll go a-roarin' through hemlock, spruce and pine
From Farmington to Kingfield on the Sandy River Line.

She's rollin' over Jordan now on railroad of the sky,
Engine wraith in land of faith, I'll see her bye and bye
Just outside the Pearly Gates, her brasses all a-shine;
I'll highball into Heaven on the Sandy River Line!

* * *

ROLLIN' INTO KINGFIELD

ROLLIN' through the Maine woods on Sandy River Line,
By the icy river's brim, past the spruce and pine
Buckin', snortin', twistin'—Say, hogger, ain't it fun
A-headin' into Rangeley at the end of run?

Shove the coal on, tallowpot; climbin' up the ridge;
Steamin' like a kettle now, trundlin' o'er the bridge.
Silver-tipped with moonlight, through the deep white snows
Into drifts and out again the little engine goes.

Red-hot stoves are cracklin', drummers' pipes a-light,
Tiny lamps a-flarin' far into the night;
Happy, warm, and cozy—Brakeman, ain't it fine
Goin' home to Kingfield on the Sandy River Line?

* * *

Here is another poem about an abandoned narrow-gage road. It was clipped from the *Union Pacific Magazine* by Forest McKnight, 22 Harrison Pl., Malone, N. Y., who writes:

This poem is in memory of a narrow-gage line the U. P. used to own. It ran from Megler, on the Columbia River to Nahcotta, Wash., not quite 28 miles. All engines were Baldwins, the N1, N2, N3 and N4. They included three 8-wheelers and one 10-wheeler. The road went out of service in 1929.

IN MEMORIAM

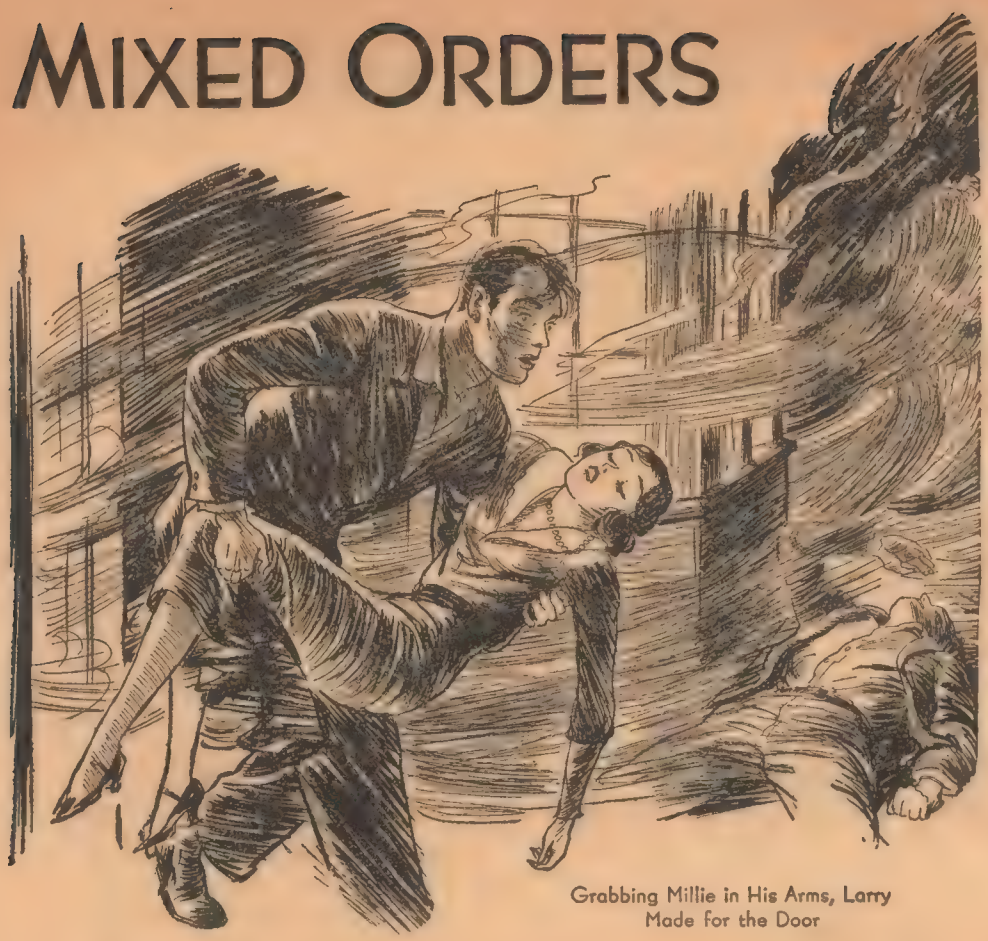
THEY'RE ripping out the railway tracks
'Way up here on the bay;
We grieve to see the old trains leave,
But they have had their day.
Remember how we used to hear
Those bells in days of yore?
Forever stilled the engines are;
We'll hear their puffs no more.

Down to the depot we would go,
To see her bring the mail;
But now an auto truck sails by
Her rusty rows of rail.
The high-toned whistle's shrilly blast
Was music, sweet to hear;
And brakemen, fireman, engineer,
To all of us were dear.

But soon the rails will all be gone
Highways will take their place;
We all regret to see 'em leave,
The trains we used to race.
On down the track at dizzy speed
(As high as twenty-two)
Those shiny engines used to race
We loved 'em plenty, too!

Oh, yes, we hate to see them pass,
Those coaches row on row;
Nothing quite their place will take,
We hate to see them go!

MIXED ORDERS



Grabbing Millie in His Arms, Larry Made for the Door

Fate Gave Plenty of Thrills and Some Mighty Tough Jolts to King Lawson, Train Dispatcher on the M. N. & A.

WITH the exception of King Lawson, none of the boys on the Red Rock subdivision regarded "Bugs" Nelson as a menace to the iron highway. King was east end dispatcher on the night trick at Red Rock. He had fought with one would-be train wrecker and was continually on the lookout for another.

Even when Jimmy Nelson was eight, before he was known as Bugs, the kid was a wizard at figures. Other fellows would ask him how many tons of seventy-pound steel would be required to lay ten miles of double track, and he could tell them instantly. At ten he could sit on the stile by the right-of-way watching a train go by, then go into the house and tell his widowed mother the number and initial of every car in it.

At the age of twenty, though he was a man of strong physique, Bugs was regarded as a harmless idiot. Unmolested, he made and sold dog chains to the travelers on M. N. & A. trains which stopped at Summit. He rode at will the blinds of passenger trains

By E. S. Dellinger

Former Brakeman, Mo. P. and Frisco

and the tops of freights, often dropping down the hill to Maysville on one train and riding up on the next. Sometimes he spent hours there, especially in the evening when Millie Grannihan was on duty.

Millie was the night operator at Maysville, and the daughter of Greased Lightnin' Grannihan. She felt sorry for the weak-minded wizard, taught him a little Morse, and let him have the run of the office.

Patiently she listened to his childish drawl about his " che-ee-ains," how he made them, and how much he got for them; also to wild stories of his running the engine on the " Katy " flyer, and all that sort of stuff.

King Lawson eyed the kid askance and frequently remonstrated with Millie, but she only laughed and went her own way.

In January, following the flood year of the Little Choctaw River, a change came over Bugs Nelson. It began when the local ran down his pet pig and killed it. He put in a claim for fifty dollars damage. The claim agent came down and offered him two. Bugs was firm in his demand for fifty. The claim agent told him to go to hell. Bugs, in his childish way, voiced the threat:

" I'll wreck yer tree-ains, that's what I'll do!"

Nobody paid much attention until a month later, when they began finding railroad spikes, cross-ties, and other

obstacles placed on the track near Summit and down almost to Maysville.

A bull immediately took young Nelson into Red Rock, and threw such a scare into him that no more obstructions were placed on the track. At the same time Bugs stopped for a while his practice of riding trains and loafing about the stations.

One night in May while the strawberry rush was on, he showed up again. Miss Grannihan had just OS'd No. 10 through at 9.50. Before closing her key, she was surprised to see Bugs Nelson sauntering into the office. She thought Bugs had gotten over his fright and was up to his old tricks of riding up and down the line.

"Hello, stranger," she greeted laughingly.

Millie was in a buoyant mood. Within the month she was to be married to King Lawson.

Bugs lifted his childish blue eyes. "'Lo, yourself."

"Haven't seen you for a month of Sundays, Jimmy. Where you been keeping yourself?"

"That big fella, he took me to jee-ail," he buzzed with a vemon such as she had never before observed in his speech.

At that moment the first of four strawberry trains, eastbound over the division, whistled for her order board. Millie had a "19" order for the crew. She snatched the lantern and the two sets of orders, which had been neatly folded ready to hand up, hastened out to the platform and swung the engineer a highball.

At thirty-five miles an hour the train came thundering toward her out of the night. A brakeman, lantern in hand, was down on the bottom step of the tank, ready to grab the order as the engine darted by.

With her eye Millie measured the distance from the track, and stationed herself facing the oncoming train, a scant foot from the point over which the pilot bar would pass.

She placed the folded order between the second and third fingers of her left hand so that it extended some five inches past the ends of the fingers. Then she thrust that hand above her head with the lantern in the right hand, held it up, where, even in the darkness, the brakeman could see the tissue sheet and grab it as the engine thundered by.

The mogul roared down the hill. There was a whirl of dust, a vicious suction which, like the vortex of a tornado, all but drew her into its path. The brakeman closed his hand over the order; it whipped out from between her fingers. With a crash, the exhaust of the mogul ripped the night and the train rumbled away toward Cedar Bluffs.

While the twenty-five reefers, each loaded to the roof with crates of luscious fruit, zipped by, Millie adjusted the second order between her fingers as she had the first. As the caboose passed, she held it up for the rear brakeman on the step to snatch it as the head man had grabbed the other from the tank.

In a moment the train had gone. The brakeman swung a highball to the engineer as a signal that he had safely received the tissue. The engineer answered with two short blasts of his whistle.

The train pounded down the grade, picking up speed with every turn of its drivers; and soon the markers were lost to sight in the curve where the tracks of the M. N. & A. follow the winding of the Little Choctaw on its way past St. John's and Belle Isle.

When she reëntered the office, Millie found Bugs Nelson standing as she had left him. She dropped into her chair and OS'd the extra through at 10.05. The moment she had finished, Bugs spoke again, continuing the conversation where he had left off.

"Big fella told me to kyeep away from these tree-ains er he'd put me in jee-ail all the time."

"What you been doing all spring?" the girl inquired, trying to divert Nelson's mind from his grievance.

"Makin' chee-ains, lotsa chee-ains," he returned.

"That some of them?" She nodded to a bulge in his left coat pocket.

Bugs gave a silly grin and shifted the bulging pocket around out of her sight. Still Millie did not grow suspicious. He had always been peculiar.

"Let's see them," she urged, holding out her hand.

Bugs studied her face for a long time. A peculiar glint came into his big eyes. Finally he walked over to her chair and held up one of the "chee-ains."

It consisted simply of two rings made of No. 12 wire, ingeniously arranged to open or close like a wire safety pin. The rings were fastened each to the other on the side opposite the opening by a wire link.

"Why—why that looks like a pair of handcuffs, Jimmy." The brass pounder smiled. "Going to arrest somebody?"

"Nee-o. Them ain't handcuffs. Them's—them's—" He dropped his eyes and stuffed the affair back into his pocket. "Them's calf hobbles. I've got a lot of 'em."

Bugs sauntered out through the waiting room to the platform. Millie busied herself about the office. She filed a batch of orders, swept the floor, and then chatted for a moment over the wire with her father, who was night operator at Lynn Creek. Presently King Lawson called down for a visit by wire during a lull in business.

"I've company tonight," Millie remarked in dots and dashes. "Bugs Nelson."

"Better watch him," King clicked back. "He's on the warpath over that pet pig. Lock your office door."

At that moment the yard office in Latour called the dispatcher, asking him to clear First 35 for the west.

II

King Lawson, the youngest dispatcher ever given a trick on the M. N. & A., handled responsibility with a rare degree of efficiency.

During his first year with the company King prevented Pug Horan, the trainmaster's nephew, from wrecking the "Texas Flyer." More recently, while serving as night op at Belle Isle, he had been asked by Superintendent Wall, in the absence of engine crews, to run two locomotives through the flood of the Little Choctaw and set them on the bridge. King complied with the request and saved the bridge. In doing so he was swept down into the flood, from which he was rescued by Millie Grannihan. As a result, he was promoted to dispatcher.

Dispatching trains on the Red Rock sub, with its 130 crooked miles of single track, was no job for weaklings. The office at Red Rock, in the Ozark Mountains, was a three-man affair. In the center of the room, filled always with the chatter of talking instruments, was a huge table, divided by a T-shaped partition into three parts.

The north end was occupied by "Shorty" Greaves, who handled the traffic on 300 miles of the Gulf Lines,

which crossed the main stem at Red Rock, while "Slim" Ware looked after the west end on the south end.

On the east side, across the partition from Ware, King Lawson issued orders to the opposing streams of trains which worked like ants along the stretch of hill and valley between Red Rock and Latour. In addition, King handled also the trains on the Fruitland branch, which joined the main line at Fruitland Junction, two miles below Summit.

Tonight when Latour reported first No. 35 ready for orders, the dispatcher immediately broke off his telegraph chat with Millie Grannihan in Maysville. No. 35 was the "Texas Manifest." It could not be delayed. With his left hand, King jerked the green shade lower over his eyes and dropped that hand to the rows of figures on his train sheet.

Tonight that sheet was full. Never since he had been on the job had his ingenuity been more taxed in keeping the line open and traffic moving. Besides the eight regular passenger and express trains and an equal number of regular freights, three strawberry trains, headed east, must be gotten through *without delay*.

Before the first of these had cleared the yards in Latour, four train loads of excursionists, headed for Chicago, would arrive in Red Rock. Each of these must be given running rights and meet orders and gotten to Latour *without delay*.

Also, there was at Berryville, eleven miles from Fruitland Junction, out on the branch, one Extra 151, a fourth strawberry train. It should have been in Latour by 10.30. But a green brakeman had thrown a switch under the tank wheels, and now the strawberry train was hung up in Berryville with no very definite information as to when it would be able to move. It must be gotten on the main line at Fruitland Junction and shoved through to Latour.

Before clearing First 35 at Latour, King called the operator at Berryville, who had been routed out by the train crew after they had had their trouble, and asked him to get a report on the probable time of leaving for Extra 151. Two minutes later the operator reported:

Exa 151 shd be leaving by 12:00

King consulted his train sheet. If the extra left Berryville at midnight, it should arrive at Fruitland Junction and become a factor in main line traffic at 12.20.

If it got on the main line at 12.20,

it should go down the hill to Maysville ahead of 2 and 6, which were on time and running ten minutes apart. He consulted the sheet an instant longer, decided that the extra would probably make Mill Creek, 12 miles from Latour, for its meet with 5 and 7.

Before King had issued the orders which No. 35 must have before leaving Latour, Greased Lightnin' Grannihan called in from Lynn Creek to report Extra 763, the second strawberry train, by at 10.50.

King nodded approvingly. Hogger Bill Welch was stepping along tonight, showing No. 2 a clean pair of heels. He would probably take coal and water at Imes and follow the two streaks of varnish down the hill. Some runner, that boy!

Having previously determined to put the branch line extra on a schedule from Fruitland, King wrote the following order, addressing it to Extra 151 at Berryville and to No. 35 and westward extras at Latour:

> Eng 151 run strawberry extra Fruitland Jct to Latour with right over all except first class but will wait at
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Fruitland Jct until | 12:20 |
> | Hickory Flat | 12:26 |
> | Maysville | 12:33 |
> | St. John | 12:48 |
> | Belle Isle | 12:58 |
> | Cedar Bluff | 1:09 |
> | Swinton | 1:27 |
> | Mill Creek | 1:38 |
> | Deer Lick | 1:51 |

He studied the order a moment before transmitting it, figured First 35 would make Cedar Bluff for the extra. He then issued a running order reading:

> Engs 903 and 952 display signals and run as first and second Number 35 Latour to Red Rock

With these two and eleven other orders pertaining to opposing trains or condition of track, King cleared First 35, and it left Latour at 11.10.

III

THE next forty minutes were the busiest he had ever experienced. Frequently King was forced to cut into the middle of a message with his "9" signal to clear the line for orders which must be issued to prevent any of the twenty-odd trains out on his district from being tied up during a few of the minutes in which they might be moving.

It was 11.30 when Oak Gap OS'd Extra 768 by. She should have been showing at Imes at 11.50. At midnight King called the operator.

"That extra showing yet?" he queried in Morse.

"No," was the reply from Imes.

King felt a tremor of uneasiness. Things can happen in a rush, especially when a hogger like Bill Welch, pulling thirty cars of strawberries, is trying to outrun a streak of varnish.

For a moment King was worried and agitated by the rush of events.

But there was no time to waste. Berryville should be reporting Extra 151 out on the branch. At 12.05 no report had come. King called Berryville.

"How's the 151 coming?"

"Will see," said Berryville.

King snatched a sandwich from his lunch pail and started eating. Before he had taken two bites a call came from the night man at Summit, who had been ill for several hours. His condition was much worse. He asked to be relieved and permitted to go into Latour. King, knowing the fellow was one who would not use illness as an excuse to get off duty during the rush, issued instructions to call Larry Granger, the day man, to relieve him.

A few seconds later Berryville reported:

> Exa 151 still in trouble. Has to cut and run for water. Can't leave before 1:50

King swore softly. Then he laid down his sandwich and studied the train sheet. First 35 had passed Deer Lick at 11.50. He must get an order to her crew as soon as possible. She would be through Mill Creek by 12.16. But Mill Creek had no night operator.

Immediately he sounded his "9" signal to clear the line for orders, smashed the schedule put out for Extra 151, and removed from First 35 all restrictions with respect to the branch line extra. Thus the latter could not go on the main line at Fruitland Junction until 35 had passed.

Then came an ominous clattering over the wire—"W-K——W-K——W-K"! It was the signal which makes a train dispatcher's heart leap into his throat and sends him searching his files to see whether or not the blunder is his. This signal has right over all other messages and announces that a wreck has happened somewhere in the district.

King caught his breath. As the first words came in, he recognized the sender's touch. Anxiously he listened, calmly he wrote, while the operator at Imes sent in code the following:

> Tank and four cars Exa 768 derailed Mp 163-15. None killed or injured

King gave a sigh of relief. Almost before the last click of the instrument had ended, he took down the telephone, instructed the yardmaster to order the wrecker for the east and to hold Second 8's engine for it.

A moment later he called Superintendent Wall and Trainmaster Horan. Even as he hung up the receiver and began issuing orders to clear the line for the movement of the big hook, the coarse voice of the roundhouse whistle sent out three long, bellowing notes calling out the wrecking crew.

Within ten minutes King had completely revised his plan of train movement. All night he had been pushing his eastward traffic, but now he caught his eastbound trains between Red Rock and Imes and held them, while moving his westward ones only with respect to the wrecker.

It was 12.12 when the wrecker report came. At 12.30 Superintendent Wall looked in for a moment to find out how things were going. He scrutinized the train sheet, thumbed through the batch of orders, and laid a hand on King's shoulder.

"O. K., son," said he. "Couldn't have done the job better myself."

"Thanks, Mr. Wall!" replied King as he began transmitting the running order for the wrecker.

At 12.33, just twenty-one minutes after the call had come, the 712, with old Bob Lathrop at the throttle and a wrecking crew in the caboose, was puffing by the office, hurrying eastward to rerail four cars and a wrecked tank, and clear the line of a jam which was costing the railroad $5,000 an hour.

With the wrecker on its way and eastward traffic at a standstill on the west half of King's district, there came a lull in the chatter of the keys. At 12.40, Larry Granger called in to report that he had taken charge of the office at Summit.

King reflected that Larry had probably come in from Imes on his "speeder," the light three-wheeled handcar he kept ready to carry him to poker games with neighboring operators.

At 12.46 Swinton OS'd First 35 by.

A moment later Latour reported Second 35 ready to leave within a few minutes. King issued orders bringing them to Maysville for their meet with the procession which would be released the moment the line was cleared at Imes. He then chatted a moment with Millie. Everything seemed to be O.K. in Maysville.

"Your company still with you?" he queried.

"Bugs? Yes, out here in the waiting room, peaceful as a pig in the sunshine."

With a shrug, King closed the key. Millie Grannihan wasn't afraid of the devil himself. If she had been, his bones would have been buried a year ago in the sands of the Little Choctaw. Still, he wished she'd be more careful.

One o'clock came. Westview OS'd the wrecker by. Bob Lathrop was stepping along with the big hook. For months to come, that crew would be telling their sandhouse fiction club of this marvelous run.

Berryville called in to report Extra 151 ready to leave at 1.20. The last guess on them had been 1.50. King had not expected them to be out before that time. He must get another order to First 35 at the earliest opportunity. Failure to do so would stick the belated strawberries forty minutes.

He called Belle Isle. "That 35 by there yet, B. I.?"

"Engine just passed," it replied.

King called Maysville, "MV——MV——MV," but received no response. He thought of Bugs Nelson, crazy Bugs, in an isolated station with Millie Grannihan. His uneasiness grew. He called Larry Granger at Summit, ten miles up the hill from Maysville. Larry responded lazily:

"MV can take care of herself. Don't worry."

King did worry, but remembered he was dispatching trains on a busy trick. He cut in with his "9" to clear the wire for orders, but just as he placed his finger on the key to start sending, the unheard-of happened. *Some hand, a strange hand, disregarded the sacred signal and began laboriously ticking out a message!*

King paused, dumfounded. Slowly, yet clearly, the sounder sent in the signal "HLP——M———" Then as suddenly as it had begun, the sounder hushed.

IV

For a moment King sat clutching the table. There was no doubt in his mind but that the call for help, breaking in over his signal, had come from Maysville. That it was Millie herself, injured so that her sending was unnatural, he felt with definite certainty.

What had happened, he did not know, but the conviction grew upon him as the seconds ticked by that Bugs Nelson, crazy Bugs, was somehow woven into the fabric of a tragedy which even now might have been enacted.

His first thought was to rush to her rescue. But he was in Red Rock. She was in Maysville, ninety miles away. Between them was a wreck which trains might not be able to pass for hours. Between the wreck and Maysville was not even a locomotive, except on the strawberry extra out on the branch line between Berryville and Fruitland Junction.

With lightning-like swiftness, his thought stream zigzagged over the strawberry extra—First 35—Second 35—No. 5, not yet out of Latour. He decided First 35 was the one train upon which to pin his hope.

But wait a minute! First 35 should

have been by Maysville several minutes ago! No, *in* Maysville! For he had given Millie a "31" order instructing First 35 to meet the strawberry train there. She would have had her board out for them. Certainly Pug Horan, who was tonight running the 903 as emergency engineer, would not go by that red board. If her board had been out, first 35 would have stopped.

But suppose Bugs Nelson had taken charge of the office and pulled down the board before First 35 went by? King pictured what might happen if First 35 passed Maysville without the meet order. That order was the only notice her crew had that an extra was on the line. If First 35 had not been warned, then collision somewhere on the crooked hill was almost inevitable!

Cold sweat covered his forehead.

Other tasks, other trains were forgotten, while the harassed dispatcher tried to clear his mind for action. His thought flashed back to Millie Grannihan down in the lonely station at Maysville.

Then came the click of an instrument, "MV——MV——MV." King knew that touch; Larry Granger was calling from Summit. Larry was near her, only ten miles away. And Larry kept his velocipede, his speeder, always ready to ride. Suddenly he cut in with a swift, unerring touch, "DS——DS——DS" (dispatcher) and queried:

"What's wrong at MV?"

"Don't know," King flashed back, then continued: "Speeder handy?"

"Speeder?" was the answer. "Yes. On platform."

King did not issue any orders to engine crews in that moment. Seconds were precious. Besides, with two trains timed to hit somewhere down on Maysville Hill and with both of them by the last open telegraph office, orders seemed useless.

The message he gave Larry Granger was all he transmitted. He knew that message meant danger, maybe death, to his best friend.

V

At Summit, Larry did not even wait to take his cap from its nail or to pull in his order board. He grabbed the red lantern and the white one, snatched a dozen red fusees and some signal torpedoes from their box, ran out to his speeder and flung them all upon its platform.

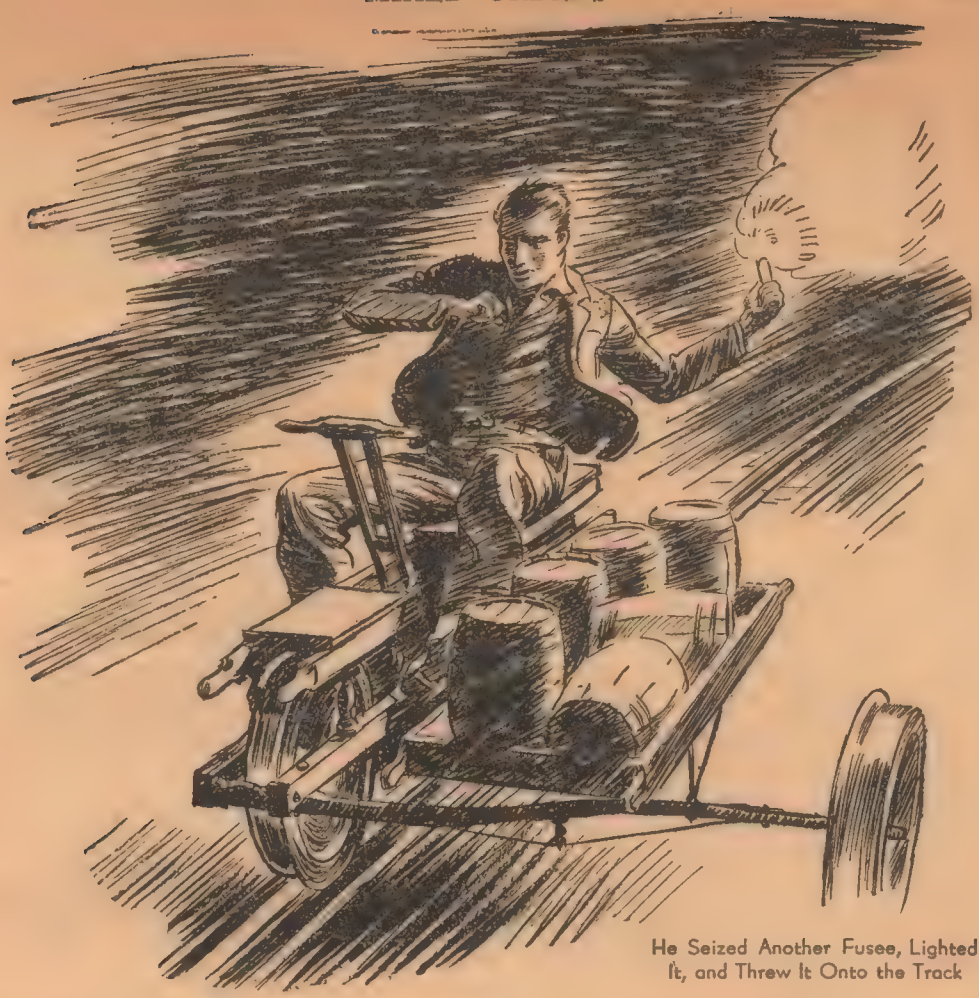
Spurred by the knowledge that little Millie Grannihan was in danger, Larry worked with a haste of which his friends would have said he was incapable. He shoved the little red machine to the main line, set its wheels upon the glistening rails, and sprang into the seat.

This "speeder" was a three-wheeled handcar. The driver rode astride the two-wheel frame over the left rail, and impelled the vehicle with hand lever and treadles, connected to the driving wheel by a series of cogs. The third wheel ran the right rail, with the platform over the ties.

Larry could run twelve or fifteen miles per hour on the level. On the down grade to Maysville he had made as much as twenty-eight; and with a heavy load he guessed he could do even better than that.

As he pumped by the end of the station platform, he noticed a pile of kegs, which the supply car had stacked there that day. Each keg contained a hundred pounds of railroad spikes for use on the section. He set his brake, sprang off the machine, and flung several of them upon the speeder.

"They'll make good ballast," he



He Seized Another Fusee, Lighted It, and Threw It Onto the Track

muttered grimly as he leaped back into the seat. "Reckon I'll run now when I hit the hill."

He threw his feet against the pedals, seized the handle bars, and began to pump. Faster and faster came the strokes.

At fifteen miles an hour the east switch swam by. At eighteen, Larry took the curve below and came out in sight of the distant signal for Fruitland Junction. The yellow eye blinked its warning. The strawberry extra might even now be using the switch. He could not see the light.

As he ran by the caution light, Larry realized that he had neither bell nor whistle, that he was plunging down the hill into unknown dangers, with only the stars above to give him light!

He turned loose the handle bar, grabbed a red fusee, and thrust it lighted upon his platform.

Coming in sight of the junction switch, the operator saw that its light was green. His eyes swept through the trees to his right. But no light was there visible. Possibly the strawberry train had already gone down the main line to crash with First 35. He did not know.

Every wheel was singing its song. Larry was glad he had oiled the mechanism that evening. Otherwise, its

wheels would have burned with the load and the high speed.

He had removed his feet from the pedals, his hands from the crank. They added no momentum now to the flying car. Never had those bars zipped past his nose with faster action.

He reached to the platform, seized another fusee, jerked and scratched the cap, and threw it lighted in the middle of the track. If the extra had not gone, that light would hold it. That fusee would throw out its red flare for ten minutes. While it burned no train would dare cross the deadline it marked.

Swifter still grew the strokes of the handle past his face. The wheels of the velocipede groaned against the left rail, screamed against the right.

Except for the ballast upon his platform, Larry could never have held the rail. But with that ballast, the light brakes would be as useless on heavy grades as a paper wall in a tornado.

As he peered forward into the night, two thoughts were in his mind. The first that Millie was in danger—Millie, whom he had known since she was knee-high to a grasshopper. What if she were betrothed to King Lawson? Millie needed his help, and he was going.

The second thought was that somewhere down that hill, First 35 might be coming, fighting the grade with a thousand tons of merchandise. Larry might round a curve and meet the struggling engine face to face. He might cross some fill or trestle, or enter a deep cut in the limestone, and plunge headlong.

Still, he did not touch his brake, did not seek safety in checking his speed. A moment might mean life or death to the girl below. Even now he might be too late, he mused as he plunged down between green forest walls lining the right-of-way.

He had left Summit at 1.43. Five minutes later he had cleared the switch at Fruitland Junction. It was seven miles from the Junction to Maysville. The only break in the heavy grade was between the switches at Hickory Flats, three miles down the hill.

On and on he swerved. The red fusee on his platform was burning low. He lighted another and stuck it beside the first. Then on the chance that the extra was behind, he lighted still another, which he tossed into the middle of the track.

He strained his ears, listening for Pug Horan's whistle, for the boom of an exhaust which would tell him that First 35 was climbing the grade below. As yet he could hear nothing.

That was his only hope. For if both 35 and the extra had made their schedule, they would have met somewhere below Hickory Flats before this. In that case the track would be blocked with their wreckage and he could not reach Maysville under an hour.

VI

Millie Grannihan did not suspect that Jimmy Nelson's distorted mind was weaving a scheme involving both her and the M. N. & A., as diabolical as was ever devised by any cave man. She had no fear of the kid. Still, at King's suggestion, she closed the door between the office and waiting room and snapped the lock.

Then she went about her duties with the perfect calm of one who knows what to do and how to do it. She filed the orders. Listening to the chatter of the keys, Millie heard the wrecker ordered out and followed its progress. She heard King checking on the strawberry train at Berryville and felt a

glow of pride in the way he was keeping the traffic moving.

"He'll make his mark some day," she whispered fondly. "Be trainmaster, division superintendent, maybe general manager. And he's mine—all mine!"

At that moment she saw Bugs Nelson standing at the ticket window. In fact, Bugs had come to that window every time she had either sent or received tonight. He had stood there with a far-away look in his eyes, as if listening to voices from another world.

She did not know how much Morse he had mastered. She could not guess that mentally he was recording every word, nor that he had stored away in his crooked brain every order Lawson had sent over the wire since he had come in. If Millie had dreamed of such freakish efficiency, she might have been on her guard.

The girl unlocked her door, and went through the waiting room to the platform to get a breath of fresh air and make sure her order light was burning. Bugs had crouched down in one of the corner seats, apparently dozing. Millie remained on the platform several minutes. She was drinking in the beauties of the starlit sky.

To east and west, green switch lights gleamed out of the darkness. Across the deserted street to the north, the four store buildings reared false fronts as dim, angular shadows. A hundred feet to the south the Little Choctaw River slipped down toward Belle Isle, its waters lapping softly against the rip-rap. The sound was almost smothered in the grating bellow of a bullfrog chorus on the sandy, tree-clad farther bank.

The operator thought of that stormy night, almost a year ago, when she had taken a boat and gone down the flood in search of King Lawson. King had left Belle Isle with the two engines to set on Choctaw Bridge for ballast. That had been a night of terror, she recalled.

Entering the waiting room, Millie paused to speak a word with Bugs, to tell him that First 35 would stop in Maysville if he wanted to ride it out to Summit. But Bugs was not in the corner where she had last seen him. He was not in the waiting room.

Half expecting to see him standing over the instrument table, Millie entered the office. She had left the door open. But Bugs was not within. She did not look in the freight room. Having decided he had gone, Millie locked her door and sat down at the table to watch the track for the headlight of First 35, dragging up the grade.

About 1.28 a board creaked behind her chair. She turned her head, when abruptly a huge body hurled itself

upon her. Strong arms seized her from behind, while Bugs Nelson's crooning voice muttered in her ear:

"Be stee-ill, now, honey! I ain't a-gonna hurt yee-ou."

Millie was frantic. She fought, bit and kicked. She cried out at the top of her voice, but resistance was useless. The girl was as helpless as an infant.

Deftly, while she struggled, Bugs snapped upon her wrists one pair of the "calf hobbles" she had seen earlier in the evening. Upon her ankles he put another pair, and about her waist one of his ingenious "chee-ains." Then he closed each fastener with a pair of pliers. He attached each wrist to the chain belt and fastened the ankles to the leg of the safe.

All the while muttering and chuckling, he next pulled in both order boards, set them from red to green, clearing the line in both directions. Millie thought of the meet order she had for First 35.

"Don't do that, Jimmy!" she urged. "Put those levers back where they were. They might bite you!"

Jimmy laughed fiendishly. "I told 'em I'd wreck their tree-ains fer 'em. I'm a-gonna do it."

Having set the boards, he left the office, entered the freight room, and a moment later returned with two sacks of bacon slung over his shoulder. He went out through the waiting room and crossed the tracks.

VII

Millie became more uneasy. She knew First 35 should be coming shortly. She arose, leaned over the table, and tried to reach the levers controlling the boards. She could not touch them. Soon Bugs came back into the office. She was sitting in the chair.

"What are you doing, Jimmy?" she queried, trying to hide the terror in her voice.

"I'm a-gonna wreck their tree-ains fer 'em," he giggled. "An' then burn their deepo!"

Millie was desperate. "But don't you know they'll keep you in jail as long as you live?"

"They can't ketch me," was the crafty reply. "They can't. I'm a-goin' down the ree-iver in my new raft. It's all fastened together with chee-ains. They can't ketch us!"

"Why, what do you mean?"

A look of cunning came into the fathomless eyes. Bugs approached his victim. She shrank back.

"I like yee-ou! I'm a-gonna take yee-ou with me. We're a goin' dee-own to the cave in my new raft. We'll live together alwee-ays."

A surge of horror swept over Millie. She struggled to keep her self-control, to figure some way out of her predicament.

Bugs went into the freight room. Just then King Lawson called her. Automatically the girl reached for her instrument. She could not touch it.

Soon Bugs came out with more bacon. While he was gone to the river, she turned and twisted, trying to get to the key. Millie finally tried stretching herself out on the table. She could almost reach the key. But Bugs was returning. He must not see her. She dropped back into the chair.

The operator, tugging at chains, heard King call her the second time, heard him and Larry signaling each other over the wire. But she could not see how help could arrive in time. She wondered why First 35 had not come through, and determined to signal them, if possible, when they came.

Bugs made another trip to the river.

Millie Ticked out a Call for Help Just as Bugs Nelson Came Rushing in

Millie stretched out on the table. The belt would not permit her fingers to reach the key. While her captor was not looking, she worked the belt up her body several inches, and the moment Bugs left the station again, she leaned over the table.

At that instant King's "9" signal came over the wire, but there was no time to wait. Touching the instrument with the tip of her fingers, Millie ticked out the signal "HLP——" and started to sign "MV." But Bugs Nelson came rushing in, dragged her roughly from the table, and fastened her securely in the chair so she could not move.

A moment later First 35 whistled for the mile board. The engine came crashing up the grade at twenty-five miles an hour; the cars rattled past and the caboose clicked by.

After First 35 had gone, Bugs continued making trip after trip to the river. Apparently he was going to carry out every morsel of food from the freight room.

Millie was glad. She had heard King give final instructions. Help was coming! Every minute's delay brought Larry nearer.

Minutes passed. The wires clicked on. King ordered out the Latour wrecker, and sent it clattering toward her. Millie groaned. She knew the wrecker could never run that forty miles from Latour to Maysville in time to save her.

Already Bugs had ceased his trips to the river. He was now carrying great loads of pine knots from her fuel shed and stacking them in the freight

room. She could hear him chuckling insanely.

Shortly after 2 he went to the cabinet where oil was kept, removed the can of kerosene and the can of signal oil and took them to the freight room. Millie's heart beat with ever-quickening throb. It wouldn't be long now!

She thought of Larry Granger. Maybe he was already lying dead on some curve up toward Hickory Flats. Poor Larry!

Bugs returned and stood beside her, studying the arrangement of chains with which she was fastened. He laid the pliers on the table. Then, with a laugh, he moved them beyond her reach and returned to the freight room.

Seconds passed. The girl heard him strike a match, two of them. Then an explosive puff, and the roar of flames eating into the pile.

Millie turned her head, terror stricken. She saw Bugs come lumbering out of the freight room, pulling the door behind him. He plunged down the steps, stumbled, struck his head against the steel frame of the press, and lay still.

The crackle of the flames grew louder. Smoke crept in from the spreading fire. The prisoner coughed, sputtered, tried frantically to break the wires, to drag her chair toward the table, to get a hand on the pliers. All in vain! She was chained fast—fast as a captive in some medieval dungeon, while the hot breath of the red death swept over her sweating forehead!

VIII

On Maysville Hill, Larry Granger clung to the speeder as pole after pole darted by. The crimson light of his fusee was reflected from gleaming wire and painted poles. A mile was gone—two—two and a half.

He passed the mile board for Hickory Flats. The green light of the west switch shone through the trees. Rapidly he bore down upon the switch. He clicked over its points. The beat of the wheels slowed on the level.

Larry had not met First 35. His hopes sank ever lower. Surely the extra had gone. Surely the collision had occurred. He passed the center of the passing track. The speeder slowed to fifteen miles an hour on the level. He began pumping to keep it going.

Suddenly out of the night burst the sound of a locomotive whistle. He listened. One long blast, followed by two short ones. That would be First 35 whistling for Hickory Flats.

Larry's heart gave a mad leap. He jerked his feet from the treadles and reached for the brake. Thirty yards above the east switch he stopped, leaped off the machine. Just below, on the curve, he heard the crash of an exhaust as First 35 labored up the grade.

He ran to the switch, unlocked it, jerked the lever to head the coming freight into the passing track; and, white light in hand, swung a wild "Come on!"

Two questioning blasts answered him. He kept swinging the signal "Come on! Come on!" The engine dragged up to the open switch and stopped. Cursing, almost weeping, Larry swung up the steps.

"What the hell's goin' on around here?" bellowed the young engineer, who was Pug Horan.

"Get into that passing track, and get in there quick!" screamed Larry, dancing before him.

"What's the hurry?" Pug had climbed off his platform.

"Didn't you fellows get that order at Maysville?"

"Naw. We didn't get no order at Maysville. Board was green as a cat's eye."

By this time the conductor had come over the top and slid down into the cab.

"Where—where was the Maysville operator?" panted Larry.

"Settin' in the chair when we passed," declared Pug coolly, wiping off grease from his unhandsome face with a red bandanna.

"Yep. Still settin' there when we come by," concurred the captain. "Board plumb green. What's up?"

"Well, for God's sake, get into this passing track! There was an order out there for your fellows to meet a strawberry train off the branch. It was due here a half hour ago. Hurry up and get in."

Still Pug hesitated, looked suspiciously at Larry. "Sure you ain't drunk?" he queried, releasing the air brakes.

Larry told briefly what had happened. "What time did you come through Maysville?" he asked the conductor.

The latter looked at his watch, wrinkled his smutty face. "At 1.42. Yes, 1.42 exactly, I think. Why?"

"At 1.42 we were trying to get Maysville," said Larry. "We couldn't get a whisper. Did the operator look like anything was wrong?"

Bill Graham pushed back his cap, pulled out his watch, and glanced at it.

"Come to think of it, she was settin' kinda funny in that chair, like she was tied up."

"Tied up?" Larry repeated.

"Yes, sir. Maybe that explains why she didn't come out to the platform an' give us a highball. First time she's ever failed since she's been on the job. Funny I didn't think of it then."

Bill Graham turned to the engineer and the head brakeman.

"Pug," he ordered, "you git this drag in the clear here. Baldy, you hightail up the track an' be ready to stop that extry if she comes lammin' down the hill!"

Slowly, Pug got the train moving. The engine staggered into the passing track with its thirty-five cars of merchandise. Larry still stood in the deck, facing the conductor.

"As soon as you get in the clear, Bill," he said, "you can cut off your engine and run me down to Maysville. We've got to find out what's the matter down there."

Bill looked from Larry to Pug, and back to Larry. Pug, who was working with sand, throttle, and reverse, turned his huge frame and flung back over his shoulder:

"What're we goin' back to Maysville on?"

"On nerve, if nothin' else," snapped Larry.

"Yeah? You don't ketch this boy railroadin' on nerve. I railroad by orders, when I got 'em—an' when I ain't, I git off the main stem an' stay there. I'm carryin' signals fer a second section. How do I know but what that second section's right on my tail now? You don't ketch me backin' no engine down to Maysville or no place else without a order from the dispatcher."

Larry responded impatiently:

"Well, I've been on the wire for an hour. I've heard every order that's copied, and every OS. There's nothing between you and Second 35, and the strawberry train's got right over them to Swinton. You can go back on its rights."

"Got a copy up that order with yuh?" queried Pug.

"No, of course not. But you can take my word that the order's out. I heard it copied and completed."

Larry was fuming. The engine could make the run to Maysville in six or eight minutes less than he could make it on his speeder. He knew Pug was acting within his rights, but he was equally certain that in an emergency such as this, an engineer could only be commended for going back.

Pug turned stubbornly and glanced out the window. "Well, I ain't takin' nobody's word fer nothin'—"

"You're taking my word that you've got an order to meet a strawberry train at Maysville," bellowed Larry. "You're using all your sand and burning up the rails trying to git this drag in the clear."

"I—I ain't too sure but what you're tryin' tuh kid me on that," growled the hogger. "I'm gittin' in the clear on the strength uh rule 423, which says when in doubt pursue the safe course. I'm headin' in here at Hickory Flats, an' I don't aim to move without an order to go."

Larry looked at Bill Graham. "What about it, Bill?"

"I'm willin' to take the chance on it, Pug," yelled the conductor above the crashing sound of the exhaust. "We've got to look out for Greased Lightnin's gal."

"I done told yuh I'm not takin' no chance," Pug shouted back. "I'm not gonna run this engine down that hill an' maybe kill somebody. If he wants to go, he can walk, or ketch this extra when it comes through."

IX

Larry saw he was wasting time. Cursing bitterly, he leaped from the moving train to the ground. Then he ran back to his speeder, which he had left standing on the main. The moment the caboose cleared the switch, he went clattering down the hill, gathering speed with every turn of his wheels.

It seemed hours from the time Larry tipped the grade below Hickory Flats until he came in sight of the west switch at Maysville. The order board light was green. Rounding the curve, he saw a burst of flame leaping skyward from the roof of the station.

The speeder had slowed to sixteen or eighteen miles an hour. With a cry he seized the handle bar and threw every ounce of his remaining energy into his strokes. Nearer, nearer, he came!

The whole roof seemed aflame. At every turn of the wheels, Larry expected to see it cave in, and he sensed that Millie Grannihan, dead or alive, was within the crumbling structure!

He did not slow for the station, but sprang from the machine as it clicked by, and dashed into the waiting room. A burst of smoke met him at the door, almost threw him from his feet. He staggered, coughed. Then he ran to the office door. It was locked.

"Millie! Oh, Millie!" he called.

Larry thought he heard a groan behind the door. He backed away, lifted his heavy boot, and kicked in the bottom panel. Five times he kicked before he had made an opening wide enough to pass through.

Before entering, he ran back to the door for a breath of fresh air. Then, plunging along the floor, he burst into the office.

He stumbled over a body. Choking, gasping, he grabbed the body in his arms. He thought it was Millie. He unlocked the night lock and lunged madly for the open. Outside, he laid his burden down, cleared his blurred

Cursing Bitterly, Larry Leaped from the Moving Train

vision, and looked. It was Bugs Nelson.

With a wild curse, Larry seized Bugs by the collar. "Where is she?" he screamed. "Where's Millie?"

But Bugs only dropped down, groaning. Larry shot one glance at the burning building. From within he heard a muffled scream. He plunged back through the waiting room, back through the office, and felt his way toward the table.

This time he heard prolonged coughing. He groped until he found Millie, wired to her chair. He tried to lift her. But the wire chains held.

Seconds passed. The fire broke through the freight room door. Somewhere a section of the roof caved in. Larry left the girl for a moment to tear a sounder from its base. This he hurled through the window, smashing the glass to let in fresh air. He reached for another, and found the pliers.

Gasping, choking, he dropped down upon his knees. Wire by wire he clipped loose the bonds with which the maniac had bound his victim. Grabbing Millie in his arms, Larry made for the door. The fire sucking in through the door singed his hair, scorched his flesh.

Shielding the girl in his arms, he stumbled through the waiting room and out to the platform, just as the strawberry extra ground to a stop outside. Helping hands carried the man and woman to safety.

X

MILLIE did not return to work after the burning of the Maysville station.

Within the month she and King Lawson were married.

Larry Granger was best man. Masking the hurt in his heart behind a brave smile, he stood beside his friend to whom Greased Lightnin' Grannihan was giving away the woman he loved.

The next year was a happy one. The couple moved into a new brick house on Elm Street, and Greased Lightnin' spent much time with them.

Millie's father seemed to have lost his thirst. He did not drink on duty or off. Superintendent Wall watched him closely, and at the end of the second year, influenced by King Lawson, re-hired him as relief dispatcher out of Red Rock.

Not long afterward, Millie decided, over King's protest, to add to their income by renting an upstairs sleeping room of their large house. The first man to occupy it was a boomer engineer, who soon left to get a job on the Colorado Midland.

Larry heard about the vacancy, was weary of living in one boarding house after another, and asked if he could move in. Millie was pleased at the prospect of having an old friend of the family occupy the room.

"You don't mind, do you, dear?" she asked King one evening at dinner.

"Mind? No, why should I?" he responded gayly. "If we *must* rent the room, we might as well have Larry as a stranger."

"He seems very anxious to come," the wife said thoughtfully. "He's alone in the world, and after what happened at Maysville, I don't see how we could refuse him."

King winced. That night at Maysville had been the one thorn in his bed of roses. If only he himself could have gone to the rescue instead of sending Larry—but that was all past now two years ago. Bugs Nelson had perished in his own blaze, while Larry had recently quit the key and was now firing freight engines.

Yes, it would be all right for Granger to move in, and he did. It was a room across the hall from Greased Lightnin' Grannihan, who had now taken up his abode with the Lawsons. When Larry was in off his run, he and the old dispatcher — who had taught him all he knew of telegraphy and much that he knew of life—were constantly together. They both frequented the pool hall and, what caused King a twinge of uneasiness, they began occasionally dropping into the corner saloon together.

King still worked the graveyard trick at Red Rock, seven days a week, from 8 P.M. until 4 A.M. He saw little of either his best friend or his father-in-law, except when Greased Lightnin' held the third trick on the west end, working across the low partition from him.

In fact, King was not at home a great deal. Having won the wife and established the home, he went about the serious business of making a living, and fitting himself during his spare time for a better position, which would lift him and his family higher in the social scale.

Millie was not, by any means, a social butterfly; but she did crave human society, and occasionally wished to go out in the evening. King, of course, could never accompany her without staying away from his work. Consequently, her father undertook to look after her and act as escort to infrequent parties. But soon Greased Lightnin' tired of accompanying the girl and persuaded Larry to go in his stead.

But while King was busy, so were

galloping tongues. Gossips began to link the name of Mrs. Lawson, the dispatcher's wife, with that of Larry Granger, one of the east end firemen. Sometimes when King approached a group of men talking, they would nudge one another and the conversation would come to an abrupt stop. King noticed this, but attributed their caution to the fact that he was now acting in a semi-official capacity.

It was late in October. Business was at rush tide. Trains were streaming into Red Rock from four directions. The yards were always full and sometimes blocked for hours on end. One evening King came down shortly after 7 to get ready for his trick. He stopped in at the yard office before going on duty.

The yardmaster's private box opened into a tiny hall six feet wide by twelve long. It was to this little room that train and engine crews came to register and to get their orders from the telegraph office on the opposite side from the yardmaster's den.

When King entered, he and Bennie Durant stepped over to a table to glance through a lot of switch lists together. Here they stood concealed from anyone in the crew room. While they were running through the night's work, the door of the crew room opened and an east end crew came in.

After a brief pause, during which any man acquainted with the lore of the yards would have known those trainmen were studying the crew board outside, King heard the voice of Pug Horan:

"So Granger's bid in that temporary vacancy with old Bob Lathrop, eh?"

"Yeah. Reckon so."

Two grips planked heavily down upon the pine board floor. There came the sound of two matches scratching against the wall. Pug spoke again.

"Yuh know, I always thought Granger was jist about as worthless a cuss as ever come down the pike, but he's sure'n hell got rights over a certain dispatcher I know."

Bennie Durant glanced quickly at King. King's face was flushed expectantly.

"Yeah? How yuh figger that?" drawled another voice.

"Seems like Lawson's been so damned busy dispatchin' trains he fergot to give his wife any runnin' orders," Pug laughed rudely.

Bennie spoke hurriedly, trying to drown the sound of conversation outside the open window. But King straightened up, his face redder.

Pug continued: "While Lawson's been workin' nights, Granger's been takin' the dispatcher's *beautiful* wife out to parties an' shows, an' the devil knows what else."

There was a leer in the voice which answered: "Yeah? Been hearin' a few chance remarks about that case."

King slammed down a bundle of bills, pulled out his watch and looked at it. Bennie stepped to where he could see the men and tried to give them a signal, but their backs were turned.

"You betcha," Pug kept on, not knowing he had an unseen audience. "Latest news is that the exalted King orders his wife a pass to Frisco Monday. Then on Wednesday friend Granger comes in an' orders hisself a pass to Frisco by the same route. I know that's straight dope, 'cause the little dame in the super's office told me."

XI

LAWSON'S face changed from red to gray. His lips drew down in a tight,

white line. He turned from the table and strode to the door. Without a pause he opened the door, entered the crew room, and faced Pug Horan. His voice scarcely audible for the length of the small room, he spoke unhurriedly:

" Horan, I'm going to give you the damnedest licking any man ever got in this Red Rock yard office. I'm going to smash that dirty lying mouth of yours so you'll keep it off the names of innocent women."

King pulled off his coat and hung it on the doorknob. Pug tossed away his cigarette and stood half leaning against the window ledge. His face flushed. His lips formed a mocking smile, and catching up King's own words, he flung them back.

" Who's been lying about innocent wimmen, muh lord?" he scoffed.

" You have, that's who."

" That's a damned lie, Lawson. I can prove every word I said, an' a hell of a sight more. An'—"

King was advancing menacingly. Bennie stepped in between them, speaking in a low tone. Pug jerked off his jumper and tossed it on the floor. Eyes blazing, he started to shove the little yardmaster out of his way. But at that moment the yard office door opened and Superintendent Wall strode in.

The grizzled prince of the rail stopped with a hand on the doorknob. He looked from one to the other, as if deciding who was the culprit.

" What's going on around here, fellows?" he wanted to know. " Looks like I've horned in on a little argument."

For two full minutes no one spoke. Finally Pug Horan turned around and pick up his jumper.

" I was just mentionin' a few facts to Bill here," he said sheepishly, " concernin' a certain lady, an' Mr. Lawson kinda seemed to think my remarks wasn't exactly true."

Pug slipped into his jumper. Mr. Wall turned to his youngest dispatcher.

" Yes? Lawson, what of it?"

" Mr. Wall, when a man starts peddling slanderous, gossiping lies concerning my wife, there's going to be trouble. That's all."

King put on his coat and brushed a speck of dirt from it. Superintendent Wall lighted a cigar. Pug picked up his grip and started out. In the door, he turned to call back over his shoulder:

" If yuh want to find out about that pass deal, Lawson, ask Mr. Wall. He can tell yuh."

Pug slammed the door. Bennie Durant went back into his den. Mr. Wall placed a hand on King's arm, and the two of them went out together.

" So you heard about those passes, did you, King?" he inquired slowly, as they walked up the platform.

" Yes," snapped King.

" Son, I have always made it a point never to interfere in the domestic affairs of my men. Right now I am going to tell you that I admire you for your loyalty. I've known Mrs. Lawson since she was a child. I hope the gossip is all false. I do not know. That pass deal may have no significance whatever; but I *believe,* if I were you, I'd do a little investigating before I said too much about it. Furthermore, if I were you, I'd take a few days off and go over to Frisco with the wife."

" Thank you, sir," King mumbled.

He did not say whether he would take the advice. Mr. Wall turned on his heel and went up the street toward town. King entered the office to take his post at the dispatcher's table.

But King didn't go on duty at 8.00. On his way up the stairs, he remembered that Greased Lightnin' Grannihan was coming on that night to take the third trick on the west end. He recalled, also, that Larry Granger had come into Red Rock at 4.00 that morning and would not be getting out before midnight.

King decided he was unfit to work his trick right now; he should go home and assure himself that all was well before he even thought of taking a thousand lives under the touch of his fingers.

Instead of taking his key, he made arrangements with the second trick man to hold the line until he came on, and promised to be back by midnight or before. Then he struck out on foot toward the home on Elm Street, saw the lightning gleam in the northern sky, and wondered uneasily what the night would bring.

XII

MEANWHILE, Larry Granger and Greased Lightnin' Grannihan came into the house on Elm Street. Millie met them at the door.

"Supper's ready, father," she called gayly. "Hurry or you'll be late to work!"

Then she caught a glimpse of her father's face. It was flushed. The lips were twitching. She took two backward steps, glanced at Larry Granger, and observed that he, too, was loaded with more juniper juice than he could carry.

The veteran dispatcher hung his coat on the rack and wobbled through the hall to the dining room. Millie sat down at the table across from him.

"You're not going to work tonight, are you, father?" she questioned anxiously.

"Sure—sure I'm goin' to work. Why not?"

"You've been drinking, father. You're not fit to work."

Greased Lightnin' laughed harshly. "I ain't been drinkin', deary. What's the matter with me?"

"Your tongue, for one thing," said Millie in dismay. "You can't—"

Mr. Grannihan gave a silly grin. "My tongue's all right, daughter. My tongue's all right."

Millie, seeing she could not dissuade him from going, drenched the old man with black coffee. Then she called Larry and asked him to go with Greased Lightnin' to the office.

After they had gone, she sat down at the piano for a few minutes. She was still sitting there when Larry Granger came in. Larry stood behind her while she played "Rock of Ages." As she ended, the girl heard her name spoken softly.

She turned on the stool to face him. At the sight of his face, she gave a sudden gasp. Larry was standing there, the blood gone from his lips, his half-drunken eyes gleaming with a wild light.

Millie arose to her feet and stroked the man's hair gently. "What—what's the matter, Larry? Are you ill?"

"Millie!" The voice was choked, unnatural. "I am going — going away—going to leave Red Rock!"

"Leave Red Rock?" she echoed. "No, you can't mean that." She peered searchingly up into his face.

"I've—I've stood all I can, honey," he croaked. "I've got to leave—you—and him, before I go wild."

"Why, Larry? You know I'd miss you terribly. Oh, I *couldn't* let you go! I—"

The woman did not complete her sentence. Larry reached blindly for

her. Before Millie knew what was happening, she was caught in his strong arms and was being smothered with alcoholic kisses.

With a little cry, Mrs. Lawson tried to free herself. She surged backward, placed her hands upon his shoulder to push him away. But in that moment the door opened slowly. King Lawson, the blood drained from his face, stood framed in the entrance!

He said nothing.

Trembling, Millie backed away from Larry and clutched her tightening throat. Larry turned slowly, facing the door.

The husband advanced toward them, treading like a sleep-walker. With one swing of his open right hand he struck Larry Granger on the mouth. Larry did not offer resistance. He wiped the blood from his cut lips on the back of his wrist.

King did not follow up his first blow. He planted himself where he could scrutinize both of them. For a long while he stared, first at one, then the other. From far away in the northwest came the sound of ominous thunder. It boomed and echoed like the opening gun of bitter struggle. King moistened his lips.

"So this is what's happening here nights while I'm working, is it?" he said slowly, every scathing word as clear as a bell. "This is the way you spend your spare time, eh?"

He paused. Millie's face was changing from pale to crimson. Larry shuffled his feet uneasily.

"I called Pug Horan a liar tonight," the husband continued. "Maybe I owe him an apology. No wonder you two got your passes to Frisco over the same route. You—"

A faint smile came back to Larry Granger's bleeding lips. He spoke in his old, lazy, even tone, as if mildly reprimanding a little child.

"I think you got your running orders mixed, old top," he soothed. "You better back into the clear till you get 'em straight."

"Got my running orders mixed, is it?" scoffed King.

"Yeah!" Larry turned to Mrs. Lawson. "Millie, tell him how I made a damn fool outa myself tonight. I won't be seeing either of you again. So long!"

Larry shuffled unsteadily out of the room and up to bed. King remained for two minutes in the center of the floor, rocking back and forth on his heels. He did not speak to Millie again, but with measured tread left the house and returned to the dispatcher's office.

XIII

DURING the half-mile walk back to the office, King revolved the situation in his mind. He had seen his young wife in the arms of Larry Granger. There was no getting around that fact. What explanation she would make, he did not know. He did not care.

Pondering the insinuations and statements of the men he had heard that night, he reasoned that the two must have been carrying on an affair for some time. Thus, his mind in turmoil, he arrived at the office.

He should have had judgment enough to know he could not work his trick that night, of course. But the only relief man now in Red Rock was Greased Lightnin', who was now busy.

For King to lay off would force Wills to work sixteen hours at a stretch. That, King reasoned, would be more hazardous than for him to take his own trick and carry through for seven hours. He would drive from

his mind all thought of what had happened at home. Striding into the office, he flung his hat on the rack.

"Back already?" Wills asked.

"Yes. Ready to go."

King was too proud to let Wills know of his disillusionment. He checked through the order book, through the mass of unfulfilled orders, through the train sheet with its maze of moving freight and passenger. A message from the general manager caught his eye.

To all Superintendents:
Special carrying foreign envoys coming to M. N. & A. St. Louis 8:00 P.M. Handle with all possible dispatch. Give right over all trains.
(Signed)
H. G. W., Gen. Mgr., M. N. & A.

"Get that one?" queried Wills.

"You betcha," answered King.

At 9.15 he announced himself ready to take charge of the office, and Wills prepared to leave.

"Better watch the old man over there, Lawson," cautioned Wills, nodding toward Greased Lightnin's side of the table.

King stepped back where he could see his father-in-law. Greased Lightnin' was resting his arms heavily on the table. He was then transmitting an order to Second No. 6. By the click of the key, King knew he had been drinking, and nodded understandingly to Wills.

"I'll watch him. Hope Mr. Wall doesn't come down tonight."

Wills went home, leaving King alone. For the next hour, with twenty-four trains moving on his district, the dispatcher was kept almost constantly on the wire.

Twice during that hour he stepped around to the west end table to see how Greased Lightnin's work was coming. Sullenly the old fellow discussed his orders with King, but even though he was in no condition to hold a position of responsibility, he had as yet not made a single blunder.

No. 2 came into Red Rock two hours late that night. Her engine crew was called for 11.50. When King came on duty, he saw that Bob Lathrop and Larry were marked up to handle No. 2. He wondered if Larry would go after what had happened at the house.

Then he tried to force thought of that occurrence from his mind. But it is impossible for a man, even a determined man, to wipe out the memory of such an incident. Every thought of No. 2 and Larry Granger sent his blood boiling, his heart throbbing with a sudden, new-born hatred.

About 10.20, Latour called in to report that the envoy special would be ready to leave there by 12.40. It was coming into Latour as Second No. 5. But since No. 5 had a twenty-minute layover in Latour, the train would be ready to leave ahead of schedule.

King could not, therefore, run it out of Latour on the schedule of a regular train. The only alternative was to give it a fast schedule and run it as a passenger extra—Extra 716—which he did.

While working on this, he heard old Greased Lightnin' swearing thickly. The dispatcher dropped his own work for a moment and stepped around to the other side. Grannihan had gotten balled up on an order to Second No. 6. King spent a moment straightening out his tangle.

The M. N. & A. maintained two telegraph offices in Red Rock, one at the freight yard, the other at the passenger station. Freight trains registered out and received their orders from the freight yard office on one

side of the city, passenger trains from the opposite side of the city, five miles away.

King gave the order for Extra 716 to the office at North Red Rock, the freight yard. He knew at the time he wrote it that he must also give it to the office at South Red Rock, the passenger station.

But his mind raced off once more to his grievance against Millie and her boy friend. It then shot over to the thought that Larry was going out on No. 2. At that point the subconscious mind—which is the evil genius of humanity—took the situation in hand.

While King was helping Grannihan, trying to save the old man's job, his subconscious self sensed that No. 2 would be the first train leaving Red Rock to meet Extra 716. It snatched from his thought stream the idea that he must issue that order to the passenger station. Nor did that idea return until long afterward.

King himself did not detect it. None of his helpers noted the slip, because each figured he probably intended to put out the order to the passenger station separately. When Lathrop and Granger left Red Rock, they neither had a copy of the schedule of the special, nor knew that such a train was on the line.

On the stroke of midnight, the storm, which had been approaching ever nearer, broke in all its fury outside his window. Lightning played up and down the Ozark heavens. Thunder crashed and volleyed, all but drowning the clatter of the instruments on the table.

Greased Lightnin', who had begun to sober, arose and peered over the partition at his son-in-law.

"Hell of a night!"

"You said it," King called back.

"Nights like this when the devil rides a lightnin' streak after his own," laughed the veteran.

Greased Lightnin' sat back down at the table. The passenger station OS'd No. 2, a few minutes later First No. 6, and at 12.42 Latour OS'd Extra 716.

But, for the moment, King Lawson had ceased to be master of the situation. He did not realize the two trains for the east had left Red Rock unaware that a special was on the line, and that the crew of the special had right over them to Red Rock!

XIV

THE night wore on. Station after station reported on the two trains which were rushing toward each other, *neither suspecting that danger lay ahead!* From duty to grievance, as the hours passed, King's mind would stray. He was seriously considering what course to pursue, whether to leave Red Rock, or offer Millie her freedom, or forget it all and go on as before.

At 1.50, when the tide of human thought is at its lowest ebb, Maysville OS'd the special by. King noted the time. At the same moment something seemed to tell him there was an error he should correct. He started back through the batch of orders he had issued since he had come on duty.

Then he touched the running order of the extra. He lifted the copy and stared hard at it. His arm stiffened.

With a quick intake of breath, he jerked the order out of its place and glanced at the heading. In one sweep he reached for his key, began calling quickly "SM——SM——SM," trying to get the Summit operator, where for years Larry Granger had worked.

Summit did not respond to his first

call. He tried again. His hand grew constantly more nervous. Why didn't they answer? At the end of two minutes, Summit opened. Quick as a flash, King shot the query:

"Number 2 by?"

"Number 2 by 1.53. Out watching."

King did not wait for more. He called to Grannihan.

"What's the matter, son?" inquired the old fellow, now sober as a parson on Sunday.

"I've got Number 2 and that special together over here."

"What's that? Don't kid me."

King's eyes dilated. "I'm not kidding. I let Number 2 out of here without a copy of the schedule of the special. They'll be meeting somewhere down on the curves on Maysville Hill."

"What you gonna do about it?"

King studied for a full minute. Then he reached for the telephone. "I'm going to call the hook and the doctors. They'll be needed."

Central connected him with the yard office. "That you, Bennie?" King greeted, his face white, his voice calm. "Get the hook ready to go east. With all the trimmings."

"What's happened out there?"

"Nothing yet. It's—"

King broke off abruptly and turned from receiver to key. A message had been coming from Belle Isle. It was cut short in the very middle of a letter. King called Belle Isle. No reply. He called Swinton and Latour and Maysville, but not a cheep did he get. The line east of Summit was dead!

King's face was gray, his lips bloodless. Into his mind flashed a vision of disaster. What could possibly have severed his connections but the breaking of the wire in a head-on collision between No. 2 and the Envoy Special?

The volleying thunder made him shudder. It even seemed that he could hear the crash as the two trains, running fifty miles an hour, came together.

He visioned a dozen coaches hurtling over the right-of-way, tearing down telegraph poles. maiming their cargoes of humanity. He visualized two locomotives locked in death embrace, with old Bob Lathrop, Shorty Shores, Jimmy Green and Larry Granger down in the seething caldron, where steam and scalding water fought with white hot coal and sizzling metal.

He seemed to be viewing with his human eye the scene of the catastrophe. And he was the author of it! He was a murderer!

Bennie Durant was jingling the phone and calling: "Hello, dispatcher! Hello, dispatcher! Hello, Lawson!"

King turned back from key to receiver and completed the sentence which, ages ago, he had begun. "—just now happened, Bennie. That Envoy Special hit Number 2 down between Maysville and Summit."

Bennie's phone clicked on its hook. King called Superintendent Wall, outlined the situation briefly.

"Be right down," murmured the official. "Hold on till I get there."

King cleared the way for the wrecker. His hand was steady on the wire as he issued order after order, but his face was white and drawn. His eyes were frightened, sunken. His grievance with wife and home were forgotten, *for he had blundered!*

Superintendent Wall came striding in. Water streamed from coat and hat brim. He laid a friendly hand on King's shoulder.

"What's the latest dope, boy?" he queried, thumbing through the batch of messages. "How many killed?"

"No report yet, Mr. Wall. The wires are out. Can't get beyond Summit."

"Then you don't even *know* they've got together?"

"Of course they've got together. The wires went dead just at the minute they would have been hitting down below Fruitland Junction."

"Looks bad."

The super drummed on the table with his fingers. Outside, lightning flared and rain poured down.

"Wrecker ready?"

"Yes. Be leaving as soon as First 35 gets in."

"Called the doctors?"

"Yes." King nodded wearily.

The super ran through the orders and checked the fatal error. Then he talked to the trainmaster, to the yardmaster, to the head surgeon at the company hospital. After that, he turned back to King.

"Keep a stiff upper lip, boy. Don't give up till the dope comes in. We'll not run the hook till we get a report, at least. It won't be but a few minutes at most."

"It'll come soon enough," muttered King. "Too soon!"

"How did it happen, Lawson? How did you ever let such a thing get by you?"

"Just a slip, Mr. Hall. Just a plain blunder on my part."

King did not make excuses. He did not tell the official that Greased Lightnin' had been drinking, nor that he had been upset by what had happened at home.

Shrugging his shoulders, the dispatcher turned his burning eyes away to watch the weird play of the lightning over the city, to stare out at the slanting sheets of rain.

The super watched him sympathetically. "I think I understand, Lawson. I should not have let you work tonight. Not tonight!"

XV

MINUTES passed. The hands of the clock crept around the dial. It was 2.30. The wrecker was standing on its spur above the office. When the rain slackened, King could hear the irregular thump of its air pumps, hear the occasional roar as the pop valve lifted. The hospital train, with doctors and nurses aroused from their beds in the small hours, stood ready to race away.

Mr. Wall called out the chief dispatcher to take King's place at the wire. King paced up and down the length of the office, listened to the chatter of the keys. Anxiously he was awaiting the call from Summit which would tell of the disaster.

Finally Superintendent Wall, his heart filled with mingled feelings of anxiety for the safety of his trains and pity for the man who had brought them together, came over to him.

"You'd better go outside and get a breath of fresh air, Lawson," he advised. "You can't do anything now. If we need you, we'll call you. Keep up your spirits. A thousand things could happen."

"Only *one* thing can happen, Mr. Wall," returned King bitterly.

The young man donned his raincoat and stalked aimlessly out to the platform. He continued down the walk past the yard office, and on through the maze of tracks where box cars creaked down from the hump, bumped other box cars standing; where the lights of working switchmen flashed through the rain.

King longed to get away from it all. He reviewed the events of the night,

turned his muddled thoughts toward the future. He had no fear of prosecution. Discharge was inevitable. He would leave Red Rock. Might secure a job telegraphing elsewhere. He recalled the picture of his wife in Larry Granger's arms.

A cut of stock cars was coming down the track by which King was standing. It would be easy! After all, what was there to live for? His wife unfaithful, his best friend a cad, his job gone, and with it all prospects of advancement.

After all, why not? Other dispatchers had sought escape from their blunders through the halls of death. Why not he?

King turned deliberately away from the cars, and walked back toward the office. The wrecker and the hospital train had not yet left. Perhaps No. 2 and the special had not met after all.

The Wrecking Crew Worked All Night in Mud and Water to Clear the Track

But before he had walked a dozen yards, he heard the wrecker whistle two short blasts. He saw it begin moving toward the east, saw its tail lights disappear beyond the curve. As he approached, the hospital train bearing its load of rescue workers puffed away. News had come from the wreck and surgeons were needed.

King did not return to the dispatcher's office. It was not necessary. He

paced the platform for another thirty minutes. A few men approached, spoke, and passed on. About 3.30, two switchmen stopped near him.

"Reckon that was some smash down Maysville," ventured one.

"Reckon so," agreed the other. "Say, old Bob Lathrop was mashed up, an' his fireman'll probably die. Lord knows how many passengers was killed or injured."

The men passed on. King arose listlessly and started homeward. But every step was torture. Something seemed to draw him away, to tell him there was no hope.

He recalled again the scene he had witnessed in the living room, remembered that he was now a broken dispatcher, a man out of a job, with failure written in the book against him in characters which he could never erase.

King hesitated, glanced back toward the yards, where box cars bumped and switch engines squealed.

"Larry may not die," he thought. "If he doesn't, they'll live on together, those two. It's him she loves anyhow. I might have known it."

The calm which follows the storm had now come. Slowly he traversed Elm Street, passed the home where a few hours ago—no, ages ago—he had seen that Granger fellow holding his wife. The windows were dark. Against their staring faces the street lights glistened. King stopped for a moment, turned on his heel, and retraced his steps.

He went to the track where No. 35 was made up, engine on ready to leave. He climbed atop the train and let himself down into the end ice box of an empty reefer. Then he dropped the lid above him, and rode the rattling freight westward from the town where he had made and lost his mark.

It was thus that King Lawson left, running under mixed orders. He did not know that the heavy rain of the night had washed out the ballast from a banked curve on upper Maysville. He did not know that Engineer Lathrop, running fifty miles an hour, had struck that curve and plunged down through the telegraph wires and ricked the coaches of No. 2 like saw logs at the foot of a high embankment.

He was unaware that the Envoy Special, running thirty miles an hour, had come upon the scene a moment later, and had barely stopped before plowing into the wreckage. But he could easily imagine that the wrecking crew would be working all night in mud and water to clear the track.

For days, restless with doubt, haunted by the crash of wrecking engines, by the screams of the souls which, in his thoughts, he had sent to Eternity, he drove westward, stopping only to eat and drink. He did not buy a newspaper, nor look for an account of the wreck.

Only in grim disillusionment will a "rail" do as King Lawson did—pull the pin on wife, home and job. What happened after he left Millie will be told next month in another novelette of this series, "Boomer Trails."

THE END

The Sunny Side of the Track

PERCY, HOW COME YOUVE SELECTED FIRING AS YOUR OCCUPATION? BOY, IF I HAD YOUR INFLUENCE—
999½
I'D PICK ME A NICE SOFT "WHITE-COLLAR" JOB. WHAT DOES YOUR DAD THINK OF YOUR SELECTION, EH?
WELL, CASEY, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH—
HE SAID HE NEVER DID THINK I HAD MUCH SENSE, BUT SINCE HE'S LEARNED—
THESE KIDS THAT WON'T LISTEN! OH, DEARIE ME, HEH-HEH
NTRAL
OAD
-I HAVEN'T ANY, HE DOESN'T OBJECT TO ME BECOMING A LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER
WOT!
Rob L. Lawrence—

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Casey in the Cab—*Drawn by Rob L. Lawrence*

Thoroughly Modern

AN elderly lady walked into a Canadian Pacific ticket office in Toronto and asked for a ticket to New York. "Do you want to go by Buffalo?" inquired the ticket agent.

"Certainly not!" she answered indignantly. "By train, if you please."

* * *

Not Exactly Fatal

THE superintendent criticized a trainmaster for not reporting accidents. A few days later he received the following wire: "Man fell off platform in front of speeding engine."

The super wired: "Advise details."

The reply came: "No one hurt; engine was backing up."

* * *

Safety First

PULLMAN PORTER (as his train approaches the station)—"Shall I brush you off, sir?"

Passenger—"No thanks. I prefer to get off in the usual manner."

Locomotives of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific

No. 7513 from Collection of Joseph Lavelle, 4615 66th St., Winfield, L. I., N. Y.

Class	Type	Numbers	Number of Loco. in Class	Cylinder Dimensions (Inches)	Driver Diameters (Inches)	Boiler Pressure (Pounds)	Tractive Force (Pounds)
A1-a & A1-as	4-4-2	3000-3017	18	19 x 26	79	200	20,197
A4-s & A4-as	4-4-2	3133-3135	3	22 x 28	79	200	29,160
C1-c	2-8-0	7000-7066	67	22 x 28	56	200	41,140
C1-a	2-8-0	7067-7068	2	22 x 28	55	200	41,883
C1-d	2-8-0	7069-7078	10	22 x 28	57	190	38,391
C1-e	2-8-0	7079-7082	4	19½ x 28	57	200	31,754
C1-es	2-8-0	7083	1	20 x 28	57	200	33,403
C1-f & C1-g	2-8-0	7084-7087	4	21 x 28	55	200	38,166
C2 & C2-s	2-8-0	7102-7149, 7601-7624	72	23 x 30	63	200	42,823
C2-s	2-8-0	7602, 7613, 7617	3	24 x 30	63	185	43,131
C3	2-8-0	7555-7556	2	22 x 28	51	200	45,173
C3-a	2-8-0	7557-7560	4	22 x 30	55	200	44,880
C3-b	2-8-0	7550-7554	5	22 x 30	57	200	43,305
C5 & C5-a	2-8-0	7200-7249	50	24 x 30	63	185	43,131
C7 & C7-a	2-8-0	7700-7716	17	25 x 32	61	190	52,951
	(Nos. 7701 and 7713 have 180 lbs. pressure; exert 50,163 t. f.)						
C9-e	2-8-0	7565	1	22 x 28	50	200	46,076
D1	0-8-0	1400-1401	2	20 x 26	51	200	34,666
F3-s	4-6-2	6100-6169	55	23 x 28	79	200	31,873
F3-s & F3-as	4-6-2	6102, 6109, 6115, 6117, 6125, 6135, 6137, 6148, 6150, 6151, 6157, 6160, 6161, 6164	14	24 x 28	79	200	34,706
F4-ms	4-6-2	6200-6216	13	23 x 28	73	200	34,403
F4-ms	4-6-2	6202-6204, 6206, 6218, 6219	6	24 x 28	73	200	37,558
F5-an	4-6-2	6300-6370	50	25 x 28	73	200	40,753
F5-b	4-6-2	6306, 6308, 6310, 6315, 6321, 6325, 6328-6331, 6334, 6336, 6359, 6361, 6363	15	25 x 28	69	200	43,116
F5-n	4-6-2	6352, 6355, 6356	3	25 x 28	73	185	37,696
F5-n	4-6-2	6351, 6360, 6367	3	24 x 28	73	200	37,558

No. 7049 from Collection of J. L. Norton, Jr., 159 Warren St., Roxbury, Boston, Mass.

F6 & F6-a	4-6-4	6400-6421	22	26 x 28	79	225	45,822
G2-c	4-6-0	2007	1	18 x 24	63	200	20,982
G4-d & G4-e	4-6-0	2072, 2079-2174	20	19 x 26	63	150	18,005
G4-da & G4-ea	4-6-0	2067, 2073, 2081-2179	9	18 x 26	63	165	18,753
G5	4-6-0	2208, 2210	2	19 x 26	57	150	20,995
G5-a	4-6-0	2219-2237	10	18 x 26	63	180	20,458
G5-d	4-6-0	2239, 2241	2	18 x 26	51	190	26,676
G5-e	4-6-0	2266-2275	10	19 x 26	53	180	27,095
G5-f	4-6-0	2201	1	18 x 26	57	165	20,780
G5s & G5-xs	4-6-0	2250-2264	15	19 x 26	63	180	22,794
G6-a, as, bs, cs	4-6-0	2300-2332, 2700-2712	44	20½ x 26	73	200	25,445
G6-d	4-6-0	2713, 2714	2	18 x 26	56	200	25,572
G6-e	4-6-0	2715-2717	3	19 x 26	63	200	25,327
G6-fs & gs	4-6-0	2350-2371	22	20 x 26	63	180	25,257
G6-k	4-6-0	2335	1	20 x 26	57	190	29,467
G6-k	4-6-0	2336	1	20 x 26	57	200	31,017
G6-ms & G6-ns	4-6-0	2372-2393	22	19 x 26	63	200	25,327
G6-os & G6-ps	4-6-0	2760-2775	16	22 x 26	69	200	31,004
G6-r	4-6-0	2337-2340	3	10 x 26	57	190	26,554
G6-ra	4-6-0	2338	1	19 x 26	61	190	24,850
G6-s	4-6-0	2751-2759	9	22½ x 26	69	180	29,200
G7, G7-s, G7-as	4-6-□	{ 2400-2455, 2800-2822, 2852-2865 }	65	21 x 30	69	200	32,595

G7-bs & G7-cs	4-6-0	2867-2890	24	22 x 28	63	180	32,912
G8 & G8-a	4-6-0	2600-2641	42	22 x 28	63	200	36,568
H7	4-4-0	701-713	5	18 x 24	63	150	15,705
H7-b	4-4-0	723-725	3	17 x 24	63	180	16,844
H8	4-4-0	900-908	9	18 x 26	67	180	19,251
I5, I5-a, I5-b	0-6-0	1160-1296, 1500-1536	174	19 x 26	51	180	28,158
I6	0-6-0	1297-1306	10	20 x 26	51	180	31,200
K1 & K1-as	2-6-2	5000-5049, 5500-5644	193	21 x 28	63	200	33,320
L1-as	2-8-2	8500-8519	18	24 x 30	63	200	46,628
L1-s	2-8-2	8505, 8518	2	26 x 30	63	185	50,620
L2, L2-a, b, r	2-8-2	8000-8179, 8200-8399	380	26 x 30	63	200	54,723
L3	2-8-2	8600-8699	98	27 x 32	63	200	62,949
		(Some have 190 lbs. pressure and exert 59,801 lbs. t. f.)					
L3-a	2-8-2	8605, 8610	2	27 x 32	63	200 (with booster)	74,469
M1-d	2-6-0	2958-2963	6	20 x 24	51	160	25,600
M1-e	2-6-0	2965-2968	4	19 x 26	57	200	27,996
M2	2-6-0	2975-2978	3	20 x 28	63	200	30,222
N1, N1-s, N2	2-6-6-2	9100-9104, 9501-9523, 9600-9610	23	23½ & 37 x 30	57	200	70,396
N3-s	2-6-6-2	9300-9314	15	21½ x 30	57	200	82,720
NM1	2-6-0	1	1	15 x 18	36	140	13,359
NM2	2-6-0	2-3	2	14 x 20	42	180	14,280
NC1	2-8-0	4	1	15 x 18	37	145	13,490
S1	4-8-4	9700	1	28 x 30	74	230	62,136

Classes NM1, NM2, NC1 are narrow gage Total: 1,721

ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES

Class	Numbers	No. of Locomotives in Class	Voltage	Starting Tractive Force
EF-1	10200-10241	42	3000	112,750
EP-2	10250-10254	5	3000	114,450
EP-3	10300-10309	10	3000	105,000
ES-1	10000	1	1500	24,725
ES-2	10050-10053	4	3000	41,000
ES-3	GV-11	1	600	20,425
OE-1	5800, 5801	2	600	45,695

Total: 65

Information About Sets of Photos in This Series on Page 425

Next Month: RICHMOND, FREDERICKSBURG & POTOMAC. In Near Future: Central of Georgia, Lehigh & New England, Mississippi Central, Lehigh Valley

TRUE TALES OF THE RAILS

Actual Happenings Told by Eye Witnesses

T·N·T for FUEL

By O. Kuhler

Illustrated by the Author

IT happened in the beginning of the World War. I had been drafted in the German army and was immediately sent to Belgium. German engineers had no experience with the Belgian motive power, and the whole system was different. They were run on the right, whereas Belgian roads run left.

I got my assignment at the shops of Luik to put under steam anything that had wheels. There certainly were a lot of beautiful relics—some dating back to 1864. The only good engines were a 4-6-2 type. They are still one of the most powerful passenger engines in Europe, equipped with two high-pressure and two low-pressure

cylinders, superheater and an enormous Belpaire firebox.

Around December, 1914, we had things pretty well in hand and many of the Belgian engineers had been hired back to serve as firemen. I had the advantage of speaking their language, and as they were a more or less good natured lot, got along well with them. While there was a lot of crazy and foolish work to be done (as always when military brass hats start railroading), in general it looked like a Happy Christmas.

Around December 15th, I had chased a powerful "class 10" through the shops and was just taking her out on the ready track in the late afternoon. I received orders, as there was no engineer available at the time, to back the empties over the grade toward the German border. So far, coming down the valley, the empties had been handled by a German (0-8-0) type. This small but powerful engine stayed at the head, and I was supposed to do the pushing.

As I also had to hire back the Belgian engineers to serve as firemen for engines that came out of the shop, I had picked a serious-looking fellow by the name of Maurice. He had come to the shop with first-class engineer's papers and claimed to have run a "class 10" before.

Just before we started, a captain appeared in the cab. He had never ridden in one before and here was his chance. The first order I received from him was to speed up.

But I made it unpleasant for him and his shiny uniform. Expecting a lot of crazy orders and questions, I thought I might drive him out and played with every valve and petcock that would let off steam in the cab. Besides, I got Maurice to put in plenty of fire, and when the valves started to pop and roar away he had to leave me alone with questions and orders.

It would have been a nice evening if it had not been for the presence of the captain. We got his important empties over the hump after some hard pushing and clanked into the yards of Mornet, the border station. We uncoupled and he left.

Around 8 o'clock in the evening a long troop train had pulled on the main line. I got orders to take it down to Luik. I didn't like the idea, for it was half snowing and half raining.

After some waiting I was finally called into the station manager's office, where a captain of the engineers gave me orders to be extremely careful. To play safe another German engineer, Charlie, was ordered in my cab, to keep a sharp lookout on the other side while running. We quickly became friends and while we were talking matters over we got a highball. Running backwards meant that our backs were beautifully warmed by the boiler, while our faces became caked with ice.

After we got on the down grade I eased her on and off on the air and had things pretty well in hand. Maurice was sitting on the coal and the briquettes. Just as I opened the throttle a bit after a sharp turn, I saw another train coming up on the other track, doubleheaded and blowing furiously. At that time we were on one of the high viaducts.

The next second the fire door banged open—something burning flew past my face, shot through the air and then in one blinding flash my head hit the window frame, and I fell to the deck. The engine lurched a bit, rocked and finally came to a grinding stop just out of a tunnel. On the other track the doubleheader roared past up the grade.

Instinctively I had stopped her, and there we stood in the pitch dark night and driving sleet. Behind us was the gaping hole of the tunnel; not far in front another viaduct.

It really all happened this way: Charlie, who had his wits sharpened by the rumors and the orders, had kept an eye on Maurice when he looked after the fire from time to time. Then he saw the Belgian throw in with the coal briquettes something which had the shape, size and color of a briquette, but for some reason or another did not look right to Charlie. When he looked for Maurice half a minute later the fireman was gone.

In a flash it dawned upon Charlie that there was foul play. He jumped down, tore open the fire door and grabbed in the flames, burning his hand badly. But he got what he wanted—a small parcel, half aflame. That was what passed my head. The peaceful briquette exploded in the air near by.

After a short inspection we were glad to leave that spot. Finally we rolled into the yards of Luik. We had to answer a lot of questions and were finally released, Charlie with a burned fin and I with a sick feeling.

We got a few days off and made a job of it. Charlie also got decorated; he deserved it. During these few days we were talking about it a lot, we would agree that if we had not gone downhill with a slow-burning fire, the roaring flames in the firebox would have consumed the wrappings of the bomb faster.

Why it did not happen while going up I can explain only by the presence of the official with his gun! Thanks and apologies to the old boy who saved my life through foolish questions, orders and general curiosity.

My First Train Order

By Paul E. Hill

HERE'S one that might get a laugh. I hired out as an op on the S. P. Stockton Division and was sent to the little town of Firebaugh, Calif. It was my first railroad job and I knew nothing about the book of rules, although the chief dispatcher had given me a copy to study. I was afraid I might go to sleep, being assigned to the third trick.

The dispatcher called and told me to copy a 19 order for an extra west. At that time I didn't even know what a caboose was, and I supposed the conductor and engineer both rode on the engine, so I filed one copy of the order and rolled the other two copies together with the clearances and put them on one hoop.

After I walked up and down the platform for about two hours, fearing he might get by me, the extra finally came in sight. I got as near to the track as I could, closed my eyes and let go the hoop. Well, he got it all right, through no fault of mine.

I stepped back and watched the rest of the train roll by. When the caboose passed I saw a man standing on the step with a lantern on his arm, looking up at the board, which was red. I waved at him and went back into the office, OS'd the train, and thought I'd

done a good job on my first order. A few minutes later I glanced out the window in the direction the train had gone, and saw a big red glare down the track. It was a fusee, although I didn't know it then. As I watched the light, the train was backing up to the station. I wondered what the trouble was, and thinking I had made some serious mistake, I looked at my copies of the order of the clearance, but everything seemed O. K.

So I waited, figuring I was in for a good "bawling out." The conductor finally came in and asked: "What the hell have you got on the board?"

When I said I had given both copies of the order to the head end, thinking the conductor rode the engine, he laughed, and everything was jake.

Three Narrow Escapes

By Leonard Puckett

I SHIPPED out of Denver as a cook in 1912 when the C. B. & Q. was grading in Wind River Canyon for a new extension. Worked in a station camp a mile east of Black Canyon, where we were up against 18 miles of solid rock work.

A cable was stretched across Wind River. Whenever we got a supply of beef, it was sent across by this cable. Once I was helping get a side of beef out of the basket. I leaned over too far, fell into the river and was almost drowned. However, the Swedes fished me out and I stayed there until pay day, then drifted to Chicago.

I shipped out of Chicago for J. J. Greer in 1914 and joined the Burlington construction camp at Powder River. We were laying the steel into Casper, Wyo. The camp had 200 Negroes. We got within three miles of Casper when it was pay day. The Negroes were not allowed to go to Casper, but they got plenty of whisky anyway. That afternoon they started a dice game. I had sent for relief, so I joined them.

Well, we shot crap until sunrise the next day. About that time a fight started. When it was over, there were four dead Negroes, two badly cut up, and about 20 in jail at Casper, and I was walking back to Powder River.

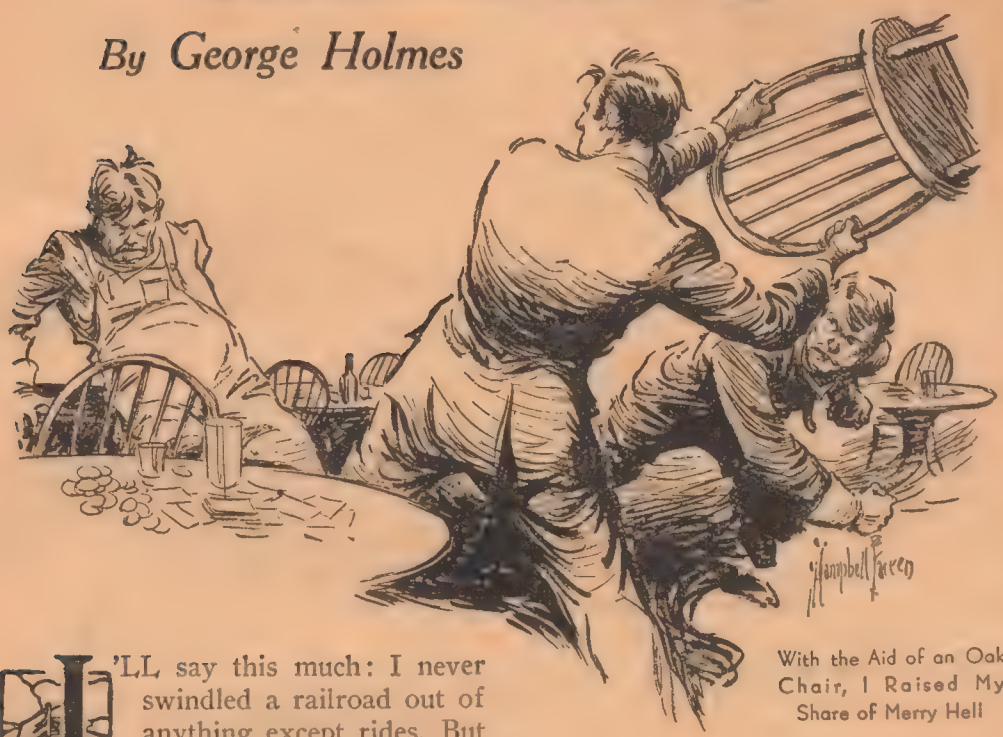
Another close shave I had was in 1910, in Colorado. I was beating my way from Pueblo to Trinidad. It was cold so I volunteered to get on the jack and pass coal. This offer was accepted. On the other side of Walsenburg are some coke ovens. The crew had to set out cars on a wye there, but by the time we got back to the main line the water was pretty low, and it was four miles to the next tank. When we started for that tank, the engine popped off! And the tank was dry!

Right then my hair turned gray, but we were going so fast I couldn't get off, so I had to stick. We reached the tank O. K. The hogger had made that four miles in nothing, but I didn't feel safe until water started flowing into the tank.

I'd like to hear from any of the rails who remember me. The address is 514½ Main Street, Kansas City, Mo.

Confessions of a Boomer Crook

By George Holmes



With the Aid of an Oak Chair, I Raised My Share of Merry Hell

I'LL say this much: I never swindled a railroad out of anything except rides. But I'd like to have three and six-tenths cents for every mile I didn't pay for!

The brakemen were good, bad and indifferent—which was just the way you had to handle 'em. One day in 1922, for instance, when I was beating my way into Oakland, California, just one jump ahead of several authorities, I took a brakeman so far into my confidence as to show him my own tombstone!

You see, I had been reported as lost in action in the Philippines 'way back in 1901. A stone was erected to my memory in an Oakland graveyard. That brakeman offered me any three drinks in the house if what I said was true.

I won my point; we drank together—to the soldier, not unknown, but A. W. O. L. as usual, even from his final resting place!

On another occasion I made my way into Omaha via the North Western. From the Missouri River west I had a choice of two roads, the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley, now part of the C. & N. W., which skirted the northern boundary of Nebraska, or the Burlington & Missouri River, which followed a more southerly route through Grand Island and Medicine Bow. The two roads met and crossed at Crawford, Nebraska, in the very northwest corner of the state.

I decided in favor of the F., E. & M.

V., for it had a branch north from a place near Chadron into the Hills. Then, too, it was an easier road to beat, for any old-timer will join me in saying that, even in those days—1892—when beating any Western pike required eternal vigilance and oodles of nerve, the B. & M. R. was as hostile as the Pennsy is today.

The one-state dingbat of 1932 who simply mounts a gondola and rides, untroubled and in peace, could hardly be expected to know that 40 years ago a train crew's principal outdoor sport was man hunting—if you agree that a hobo is a man.

The situation, boiled down, was this: a dollar a division or unload. Of course any sort of a card was recognized, but the unfortunate without dollar or card must grab himself a handful of trimmings, then hang and rattle. Profuse trimmings eased the way a bit; car builders had not learned to dispense with broad roomy bumpers, "family" sets of rods, spacious platforms on blinds, and the like.

I made my way toward the Hills, picking up odd jobs in Fremont, O'Neil, Ainsworth and Long Pine. If I remember rightly, the freight division going west into Chadron was, at that time, the longest in the country—nearly 200 miles. I happened to catch a local freight over this stretch and the members of the crew were glad to carry me in return for the help I gave them handling freight. They even shared their lunch with me.

We pulled into the Chadron yards late Friday night. I flopped in the sand house and awoke to find an early Fall storm brewing, the wind bitter cold and spitting snow. I was wearing my summer B. V. D.'s, low shoes, and a suit of clothes that one could see the stars through. Not so good.

But nearly every saloon had various gambling devices and card games in a back room or upstairs. I noticed bartenders and gamekeepers cashing many checks, in fact the personal bank check was a common thing all over the west in those days.

Everyone but me seemed to have one or more checks. Why shouldn't I have one also? Fine idea, that! Down to the nearest lumber yard I sped, looking for a job.

No work, of course, but during the conversation I learned where Mr. Lumberman banked. To that institution I went and casually gathered a handful of blank checks. Friend banker hadn't as yet started that bothersome practice of printing "Desk Check" in big red letters on all paper left on the outside desk.

Now it was only a matter of waiting till the lumber outfit closed up for the day. To kill time I went up to a gambling house, which was over a saloon and was entered by outside stairs, from the top landing of which I came directly into a large room in which were the crap table, chuck-a-luck game, roulette wheel, and faro layout.

In a smaller, front room were two card tables, at one of which a stud poker game was running. Among the players were the two brakemen from the friendly local freight crew.

Promptly on the stroke of six I went to the postoffice and made myself out a check for $33, signing the lumberman's name to it. A general store gladly sold me a two-dollar shirt and cashed the rubber check without question.

Being hungry, I ate a big steak, first taking on a few shots of fire water. My obvious course now was to get rid of five or six more checks and beat it, having till Monday morning at nine to make a clean getaway. But the liquor

was working through my stomach, and I went back to the upstairs gambling joint and took out a $20 stack in the stud game where my railroad friends were playing. I hoped to make a nice winning which would enable me to redeem the check from the store and destroy it.

No such luck. 'Twas a fast game and a few hard hands cleaned me like a hound's tooth. Back to the postoffice, another $33 check cashed easily, some more drinks, and to the poker game again. Luck was more friendly to me this time, and my bank roll lasted till 1 A.M.

The game had by this time dwindled to four-handed—the two brakemen, a cattleman and myself, so when my last white check went overboard the session ended.

What to do? Nothing but peddle another piece of paper for road money; then ramble. The postoffice was locked up at this hour, so I went into one of the few all-night saloons to make out the check.

I asked the bartender for the use of pen and ink. He told me to sit at the desk and help myself. By this time there were but a few eating places open, so my territory was limited. No luck. Coming out of a lunch stand, just across the street from the saloon and gambling house where I had lost my dough, I met the three rails waiting for me, the captain well lit up.

He said to me, "Hey, buddy, why don't you come over and play some more poker?"

"I'm broke," I answered.

"Well, you play a good game. I'll stake you."

Like a big sap, I went with them, quietly ditching all the remaining checks as we crossed the street. There seemed to be no one in the gambling house; the big room was dark, but a light was burning in the poker room. They let me enter first. I walked to the poker table, turned around to sit down, when *smash!* I got it on the nose. The con, a big husky, had pulled one clear from the floor and put all his weight behind it. But I was a bit oversized too—six feet and weighed around 200 pounds.

Yellow as a hound dog morally, I never had caught myself showing the white feather physically, so my first impulse was to wear out an oak chair on the three of them. I got well beat in the end, but raised my share of merry hell in the meanwhile.

But first I had to find out what was due to come off. If they were special dicks they were armed and I was a sucker; if they were not dicks, any rough house would bring the law, we would all be pinched, and I would be a lost cause in that event.

The big boy gave me little time to size up the situation.

"Where's that paper yuh was writin'?" he snarled.

"I tore it up."

"What was it?"

"A note to my pal back in Long Pine."

"You're a liar. Take your clothes off."

They sure did examine me from sox to hat, the con trying to hit me, but one of the shacks holding his arm. In the meanwhile I really knew no more as to what it was all about than you do.

When I had dressed the big boy said to one of the stingers, "Come on, Jack, let's get another bottle. Bill, you watch this feller."

When they had gone I said to Bill, "Am I having a bad dream or what's coming off here, anyway? I help you

men with your work, then spend my dough with you in a decent way. What's the big idea in beating me up?"

"I guess you know, all right," he answered with a nasty grin.

"I don't know any more than the man in the moon. But this I do know—if you don't talk quick and loud and plain I'm going to try my damnedest to make an ex-shack out of you."

There was murder in my heart and he must have realized it, for he seemed impressed.

"It's this way," he said. "The North Western system has recently issued strict order against drinking and gambling by trainmen. You seemed to make a point of getting acquainted with us out on the road, claiming to be broke. Here in Chadron you have plenty of dough to drink and gamble with us. The Old Man thinks you're a spotter and was writing our names on that paper."

Some relief! Though I was again broke and hungry, my eyes black and nearly closed, and blood all over the front of my clothes, I was nevertheless happy.

When the other two returned the con said, "Be on your way, feller; if you're around town in the mornin' us rails will lynch you."

"All right, old-timer, I'm highballin'. I don't blame you for feeling as you do, but you've an unpleasant method of expressing your feelings. We will meet again some time, just you and I."

And we did meet again, with an even break, man to man. As a matter of fact, I kept track of that bozo and some years later railroaded many a mile and did some expensive conniving to bring the meeting about. I got my money's worth and the gentleman said uncle in three languages. But that's another story.

THE CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, ST. PAUL & PACIFIC

THE present Milwaukee system got its start in 1848, when the rails were first laid for the Milwaukee & Waukesha, a 20-mile line. In 1851 the first train steamed over this road.

In the meanwhile the name was changed to Milwaukee & Mississippi Railway. Then a line was built across the state to Madison, and five years later Prairie du Chien, on the Mississippi itself, was reached. The next year, 1858, the railroad was finished between Milwaukee and LaCrosse.

Although this is now the main line, the first through trains between St. Paul and Milwaukee-Chicago were run in 1867 via Prairie du Chien and Calmar, the road having acquired and connected a number of short lines between Prairie du Chien and St. Paul.

In 1873 its own line was built between Chicago and Milwaukee, and the name was changed to Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul. Extensions were then built to Omaha, Kansas City, Upper Michigan and the Black Hills. Finally, in 1909, the through route to the north Pacific coast was completed.

Beginning in 1915 the road was electrified through the mountains, and by 1927 it operated 656 electrified miles. The same year it equipped its through trains with roller bearings.

In 1928, after it had gone into a receivership, the name was changed to Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific. It is now often called the "Milwaukee" road, although many old-timers refer to it as the "St. Paul" road, its nickname a quarter of a century ago. **See page 402 for its roster of locomotives.**

Photo by B. C. Rounds, Farmington, Me.

Snow Plow Opening the Sandy River Line at Fairbanks, Me., after the Big Storm of March 6, 1921

The Boomers' Corner

WE don't know of any brothers who have boomed around more than F. H. Holley and J. B. Holley. F. H. H. is a hogger in South America. Originally he hailed from Denison, Texas. He wrote us a letter giving a list of the many roads he has worked for, and said:

Would appreciate hearing from any of the boys who worked on the K. C. S. at Pittsburg, Kan., in 1920. Also E. M. Cooper, last seen firing for the "Katy" out of Smithville, Texas, in 1919. Let's hear from you, boomers. I get RAILROAD STORIES down here and it brings back memories.—F. H. HOLLEY, Locomotive Engineer, c/o Chief Dispatcher, Peruvian State Railways, Lima, Peru.

* * *

J. B. Holley is a hogger on the U. S. Government Railway in the Panama Canal Zone, his address being Box 3057, Cristobal, C. Z. On a recent visit to the States he breezed in to see us, and said:

Yes, I've worked all over U. S., Canada, Mexico and Europe. Even ran an engine 14 months in the old Russian Empire. I started in 1911 on the C. & N. W. firing out of Sioux Falls, N. D. Then I worked on the Santa Fe out of Bakersfield, Calif., and later the W. P., and a lot of other roads. Finally I drifted down to Panama, where I have been a hogger since 1920. Every engineer there has his own engine. Mine is 659.

There are only two white men in the train and engine crew on each train—hogger and conductor. The others are natives, who get about $60 a month. The enginemen get $380 a month to start; this is raised $10 a month every year until the monthly pay is $420. Conductors get slightly less.

As this is a government road, we get house rent free, ice and electricity free, medical and dental care free. Some of the things we do have to buy can be obtained from the commissary at ridiculously low rate. Food is cheap. One dime will buy an armful of oranges or grapefruits or breadfruit.

Often we run 60 or 70 trains a day across the Isthmus—a 58-mile trip (48 miles by air line). Nearly all are passenger trains. The fare in $2.88. Average time, 1 hour and 45 minutes. Our engines are Prairie types.

It's mighty hard to get a railroad job here. I am now a home guard with a wife and two children. Most of the North American railroaders here come from the South. One

exception is Bob Church, off the New York Central. Maybe you know him?

I first saw your magazine while visiting at Port Limon, Costa Rica, in September, 1930, and have been reading it ever since. They sell it down in Panama, of course. I met two of your authors—"Cupid" Childs in Chicago, and "Silent Slim" Roach, when I was running engines on the Cotton Belt out of Pine Bluff, Ark., in 1914-1915. Roach was then a conductor.

There's iron in the Holley blood for four generations, like in Layng's story, "Riders of the Iron Trail." My great-grandfather was an engineman on the old Boston & Salem. Grandpa was an engineman on the N. Y. C., Harlem Division. My brother and I are both railroaders, so is dad. I don't know what my little son will be when he grows up.

* * *

Now we hear from another boomer who has worked in Panama:

I have railroaded all over the U. S. from Maine to Seattle and New Orleans. Also three years on the "Horny Toad" Division of the Santa Fe; 17 years in Mexico; 2 years in Cuba, Guatemala and Panama, and 2 years in France in the 35th Engineers. Since 1919 I have been a home guard on the New Haven, recently put on the extra board.

We sure had fun in all the revolutions in Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba and Honduras. I ran a Farlie engine two years on the Orizaba Mountain, also two years on the Rascon Mountain. Plently of fun on pay day once a month!—C. G. Fiss ("Dutch"), 15 Moore Ave., East Hartford, Conn.

* * *

I wonder how many old boomers remember the little pony kept by a switchman in the park near the Pacific Hotel in Pocatello, Idaho, about 1890. The little fellow was very fond of loaf sugar and would follow you right into the hotel if necessary to get his feed.

Would like to hear from the two old boomers, Mulford and Mercer, O. R. C. men who were working in Pocatello braking for "Baggage Car" Thompson, 1891.

I caught the crew once on an extra west with Engine 1034, Engineer Sullivan. After reaching Huntington, Ore., western terminus of O. S. L., we started back and had to make two successive turns at Nampa, Idaho, instead of going through to Glen's Ferry and then on to Pocatello. Two successive turns were very unusual.

On this occasion we saw a Chinaman's cue hanging on the wall in a saloon at Nampa. The Chinaman had clipped it off himself and sold it in order to get a "stake." There may be many of them hanging around now, but it was the only one we had ever seen.

Mulford and Mercer wore full beards at that time. Should they see this, they will recall the hard luck we had with cars off the track, sloppy weather during above trips, etc. "Baggage Car" Thompson got his nickname account of one conductor using the baggage car and another using the box car for a caboose. Both were named Thompson. Wake up, old heads, and send me a line.—J. J. McNamara, 242 Griffith St., Jackson, Miss.

VANISHED RAILS

A MAN is old, I've heard them say,
When his visions are all of yesterday,
When his eyes are turned to scenes that are gone;
He lives in the past while Life rolls on.

And that, perhaps, is why I dream
Of roaring stacks that billowed steam,
Of two thin lines of silver light
That led through the forest aisles at night.

A crossing whistle long and clear
Reminds me of the cheek so dear
That sometimes nestled close to mine
When I busted fog on that logging line!

There are rails no more where we used to ride,
For the trees are gone from the mountain side;
And the teeming life, of which we were part,
Is only an echo deep in my heart.

But I see in the night a water tank—
I hear the side-rods' muffled clank,
Or the eerie whine of the dynamo—
And I see a face in the firebox glow!

Oh, a man is old—I guess it's truth—
When his thoughts are all of days of youth,
When visions are full of hours that have flown;
He lives in memories and he lives alone.

But I wouldn't trade for youth nor gold
Just two little dreams of those days of old:
The clank of the side-rods drifting free—
And the girl who rode in the cab with me!

—Frank Bennett

One of the Many Passenger Cars Built by the Author for Miniature Main Lines

A MODEL R.R. COACH

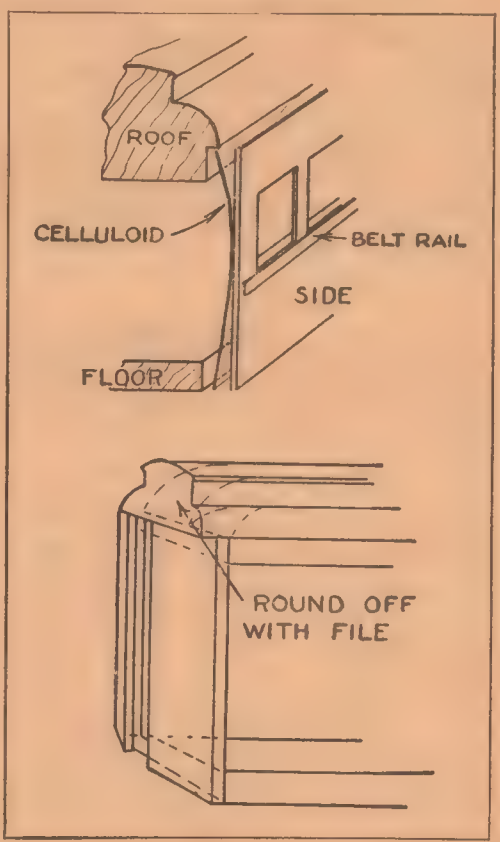
By E. P. Alexander

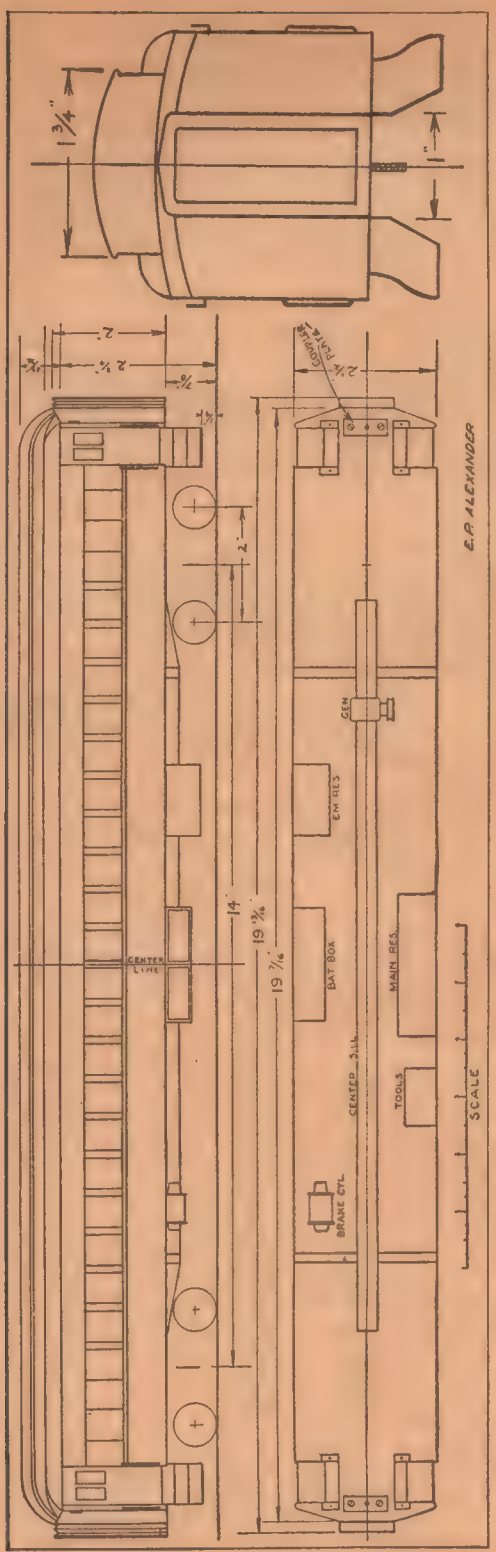
COACHES are the first passenger stock you should acquire for your model railroad. Pullmans, although popular, should be added later after your passenger service increases.

The coach shown here is the average standard length and may be lettered with the name of any railroad you choose. Those interested particularly in Pennsylvania coaches may obtain sides which are different from the car shown in the drawing, as well as blueprint, from model supply firms. A list of parts, some of which you can make yourself, is given below, together with the usual cost of each:

One roof, 50 cts.; 1 floor, 20 cts.; 2 ends, 12 cts.; 1 pr. sides, $1; 4 steps, $1.50; 1 pr. vestibule diaphragms, 75 cts.; 1 pr. trucks, parts $2.75, fin. $4; 2 strips celluloid for windows, 20 cts.; 1 pr. couplers, 85 cts.; 1 pr. coupler plates, 15 cts.; brass wire for marker brackets and handrails, 10 cts.; 1 brake cylinder casting, 15 cts.; 1 generator casting, 15 cts.; cardboard strips for belt rails, 5 cts.; embossed heavy paper strips for riveted appearance, set 25 cts.; pieces of dowel, ½" sq. wood strip, etc., for underbody details; washers and rivets for ventilators.

There are, of course, many methods of building such a car, but the one described here will be found easiest. These construction details are usable for all types of passenger cars, so save them.





The sides of the car could be made of heavy cardboard, mounting board, academy board or similar material. They may be purchased with windows already cut out, or you could make them at home yourself. In the latter case, the windows may be cut out with a sharp knife, razor or chisel.

When the sides are cut out as indicated, glue a narrow cardboard strip just below the windows and ending at the doors on each side to represent the belt rails. The doors may be cut out separately and glued on from the back. Strips of heavy paper also are glued on the back to show about 3/32" above the bottom of the windows and represents the bottom of the sashes.

Now give the sides a coat of paint, preferably green—unless it is a P. R. R. coach. Take care to do all the window frames. Otherwise, after the glass is in, it would be almost impossible to paint them. While the paint is drying, the body can be assembled.

It would be advisable to purchase the milled roof for the car, which comes in the right shape. The under side is cut back the thickness of the ends. These are nailed on with brads.

Cut the floor to fit exactly between these, and nail it in. Steps, underbody details and vestibule diaphragm castings may now be put on. Brads are sufficient, although screws may be used if desired. The roof is rounded down on the ends, as shown in the drawing. Curved strips of heavy paper, glued on, will cover the joint between roof and ends.

If the sides are ready to be attached, use celluloid with the curve outwards. (See drawing.) Tack the sides on with small nails. It is not important how many of these are used, but there must be enough to hold the sides on the body smoothly.

Now the strips of heavy paper on which rivets are embossed may be glued at the top (width of letter-board) and at the bottom of the sides, to cover the nails and give a riveted effect. These could be made with a dressmaker's star wheel, but you would find it necessary to experiment a while before they will be good enough to use on your car.

Now add the finishing details. These are hand rails, shaped of stiff brass wire and driven into tight holes on either side of the doors. Also marker lamp brackets handled similarly, and trucks. The last may be put on with wood screws or mounted on brass plates as previously described for the box car. (See August issue.)

There are many types of four-wheel passenger trucks available, so you can take your choice. Ventilators, if used, may be made as shown and put on top of the car. Ten is the usual number.

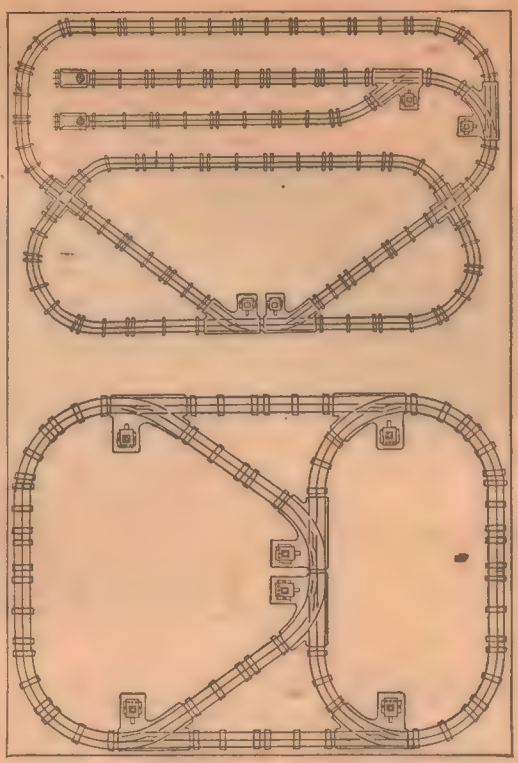
Finishing may be in enamel, flat colors with two coats of varnish rubbed down, or semi-gloss. A deep olive green is about right. Hand rails, vestibules and ventilators should be black. Lettering—which may be done as described with box car—should be in gold or yellow.

If these instructions are followed with reasonable care, you will find your finished car to be surprisingly strong and an excellent addition to your railroad.

* * *

Comments from Readers

I'm looking for a toy locomotive, O gage. I belong to a miniature railway club in this city, and your magazine has its place on the table at every meeting. In fact, each member has his own copy, and Alexander's article of the month is gone into. I enjoy all your stories—be they murder, love, or otherwise—just so long as a locomotive whistle is heard now and then.—ARCHIE MCINTYRE, M. Tavistock Apts., Wellington Ave., Winnipeg, Man., Canada.



Suggested Track Layouts for Those Having O Gage Lionel Trains and Limited Space

As for your articles on miniature railroading: Most of us fellows—and I can name quite a few—who are interested in model making do not have the money to purchase the equipment for building models so far described. What the boys want is something simple to build.—H. F. CRITTENDEN, 909 E. 26th St., Norfolk, Va.

* * *

I don't like model railroading because it takes lots of money and spare time to build models. Most railroad men nowadays have lots of time but no money.—G. BLISS, Kapuskasing, Ont., Canada.

* * *

At last our German model society has issued a periodical, "The Model Railway," (*Die Modelleisenbahn*), but we will have a tough job to keep it alive.

My grandfather was one of the leading railroad builders in old Russia, though he was an Irishman. Since my name appeared in RAILROAD STORIES I have received many interesting letters from American railroaders. I was glad to get an International Engine Picture Club button.—R. C. BUCHARDT, Wilhelmstrasse 140, Berlin, Germany.

The Sandy River's Last Train Pulling Out of Farmington, Me., July 8, 1932. Unfortunately for the Photographer, a Maine Central Engine Obstructed the View

On the Spot

THIS department needs interesting letters. But keep 'em short. Very short. Space is limited. Write plainly, especially names. Double-spaced typing preferred. Letters should deal with odd experiences in railroading, unusual records, answers to other readers, comments on stories and features, frank criticism, suggestions, etc.

We haven't room to print every communication we get, so don't be disappointed if yours is crowded out. Try again next month.

Even if you don't want a drawing or an engine picture button, you can give your favorite author a break by filling in the "Reader's Choice" coupon on page 428. Or send us your choice in a letter or postcard. We keep a record of all such expressions of opinion. This record guides us in making up future issues.

November RAILROAD STORIES comes out October 10th. In fact, *every* number appears the tenth of the preceding month—unless that date falls on Saturday or Sunday, in which case we switch over to Friday the eighth or ninth. Letters for December "Spot," "Boomers' Corner," and "International Engine Picture Club" should reach us before September 17th.

Right now there is an embargo on poems and true tales. We have enough of them on hand to last almost a year. The only photos we can use at any time are those which show details distinctly, not tiny nor half buried in shadow.

* * *

Farewell, Sandy River!

Although the famous Sandy River Line has been abandoned, the tracks are not being torn up. Its friends still hope that service on this 2-foot gage road will be resumed with the return of prosperity in the Maine woods. Meanwhile, the little railroad company is forced to use motor trucks to carry mail and express, in coöperation with the American Railway Express Co.

The Franklin Journal, of Farmington, Me., says:

The first Sandy River train ran from Farmington to Phillips, Nov. 20, 1879. In 1884 the roadbed of the Franklin & Megantic R. R. was completed between Strong and Kingfield, and in 1892 between Phillips and Rangeley, the system being amalgamated under the name of the Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes R. R.

For many years the passenger traffic was large, and when the rails were extended to Rangeley there seemed to be no end of prosperity of the road. The first blow was struck in 1895, when the Portland & Rumford Falls R. R. was extended to Oquossoc, but still worse was the coming of automobiles in increasing numbers.

For four years the road has been in the hands of receivers, Josiah S. Maxcy of Gardiner and Herbert S. Wing of Kingfield, who, with the able assistance of Orris M. Vose and Arthur Robinson, at first were able to meet expenses.

The long-drawn-out period of depression, curtailing the sale of pulpwood and the increasing patronage of motors, both for passengers and freight, so cut into the revenue of the road that it was thought wise to discontinue.

The last trip was made July 8, 1932. The men operating the train and their length of service were: Elmer Voter, 50 years; Charles Hodgman, 40; Dana Aldrich, 38; Edward West, 38; Leon Thomas, 30; and Herbert Walker, of Kingfield, 30 years.

* * *

Thirty years ago, when I was working on the Sandy River Line, we were hoping to double the road's mileage and make one grand little system of the Sandy River, the Franklin & Megantic, the Phillips & Rangeley, and the Wiscasset. Only a gap of forty miles between the Sandy River and the Wiscasset remained to complete the system. The right-of-way was cleared, several miles of grade thrown up, and heavy wooden trestles built.

This was to give the state a direct narrow-gage outlet from the Rangeley Lakes in central-western Maine to tidewater and an open seaport all the year. But, for some reason unknown to me, the project fell through, and with it my fondest dream of some day returning to the old home town as chief dispatcher of the narrow-gage lines.

Among the old-timers on this little system I recall Mr. Vose, Frederick N. Beals, Herbert Walker, Elmer Voter, Rand Harden, Millard Toles, Chris Boston, Warren M. Saunders, Samuel Stackpole, A. W. McLeary, Giddeon Foss and Frank L. Dyer, some of whom have answered the last call. Their achievements form a glorious chapter of railroad history.—FRANK P. SAVAGE, Ukiah, Calif.

* * *

Was sorry to read that the Sandy River was forced to quit. Last summer I rode on that line and found it to be picturesque and well maintained. If this letter reaches any of the following men I hope they will write to me, as I met and talked with them last August: Fireman F. R. Phillips and Enginemen Hodgman and Ed West.

Through the magazine I have located an old pal who moved to Florida several years ago. This I appreciate and hope to reach others the same way.

The letter from W. F. Beckum, Jr., in the July issue was very interesting, as it dealt with ten-wheelers in passenger service. The Reading has two of the finest running ten-wheelers whose performance I've ever seen. Engines 675 and 676, "Camel-backs," have 74-inch drivers and in tractive power nearly equal the Reading Pacifics. I had these engines on C. N. J. trains 193 and 194 between Jersey City, N. J., and Allentown, Pa., during the spring and early summer of 1930.

On one trip east with engine 676, the engineer shut off at West End Hampton, 1½ miles west of Hampton, the top of the hill, and rolled 23½ miles to Somerville, including 2 miles from High Bridge to Annandale which is against the grade. The speed at White House, the foot of

Photos on These Two Pages by B. C. Rounds, Farmington, Me.

S. R. & R. L. Bucking Snow with a Little Old Wedge Plow in March, 1921

the hill, was a mile in 42 seconds (about 86 m. p. h.). The train consisted of an express car, a combination, three coaches, a diner and a parlor.

Reading 675 was built in Reading shops in 1911, had three cylinders 19 x 24 and has since been rebuilt with two cylinders 22 x 26. These ten-wheelers and the 340 class Atlantics are the most perfect machines of over 400 engines which I have fired.—WARREN B. CRATER, furloughed fireman, C. N. J., 459 Colonial Rd., Roselle Park, N. J.

* * *

Foreign Lands Heard From

From Persia comes this letter written by a "rail" who formerly served under A. P. Prendergast, mechanical superintendent of the Texas & Pacific; also under G. A. Weber, shop superintendent, B. & O., in the large shops at Baltimore, Md., and as general foreman in the Marshall, Tex., shops of the T. & P.:

I have been treated very good here. I came with a good two-year contract and a nice salary. Last Christmas Eve I received a fine letter from the director general containing a bonus check for $1,500. I have two Americans here with me, one is in charge of our garage and the other is roundhouse foreman. They are both from the South.—R. C. MOHLER, Mechanical Superintendent, Southern State Railways, Ahwaz, Persia.

* * *

I have just received from Koninklijke-Begeer, of Voorschoten, Holland, a bronze medal struck by that firm to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of George Stephenson. One side contains a bas-relief portrait of Stephenson, pioneer engine builder; the other shows his famous "Rocket."

As the original Rocket will be transported from its museum in London, England, to the "Century of Progress Fair" to be opened in Chicago in June, 1933, these medals should appeal to railroad fans everywhere. They are obtainable in bronze and silver, the price of former being 2½ guilders, the latter 12 guilders.—S. FAHEY, Featherton, Wairarapa, New Zealand.

* * *

We have some fine railway journals in this country, but none of them devote much space to American roads, which are very interesting to one who knows British roads almost from A to Z. I like RAILROAD STORIES just as it is. The general information suits me, and I have long wished to read railroad fiction such as you publish. Outside of an occasional yarn in some British magazine for schoolboys, and a very few others, I have never read any other railroad fiction.

In your April number I saw a letter from H. Farley, of Galveston, Tex., who had visited England and Holland. Mr. Farley may like to know that those Dutch engines he mentioned were built by Beyer, Peacock & Co., of Gorton, Manchester, and are only a few of many Beyer engines working in Holland, quite a lot dating back a long way. As far as I know, these 1865 machines are still working. Beyer, Peacock engines are like Baldwins, found all over the world.

It has just been announced that they are now building the largest wide-gage engine in Europe for the Russian Soviet Government. This will practically be two locomotives combined with one boiler, and will have twenty-eight bogie and coupled wheels. Its total weight in working order will be 260 tons and it will be required to haul loads of 2,500 tons.

A recent issue of your magazine showed a photograph of a "railroad cowboy" riding ahead of Stephenson's iron horse "Locomotion" in an English pageant. This is not a replica, but the original engine itself. The view was taken at the Centenary of the old Stockton & Darlington Ry. which the London & North-Eastern celebrated in 1925.

It was planned to run a procession of rolling-stock along the old line, showing the development of rolling-stock design between 1825 and 1925. The "Locomotion," which had opened the line with George Stephenson at the throttle, was taken down off its perch in Darlington station and overhauled. The old boiler was past its steaming days, but an American citizen unknowingly came to the rescue—Henry Ford, of Detroit, Mich.—and so the antique "Locomotion" hauled a replica train on the great day, propelled by a junked automobile motor hidden in the old tender. They put a bit of fire in the old firebox, and fed it copiously with oily waste, so the stack would belch plenty of convincing black smoke.

My next letter will give further information on the "Smallest Public Railway," described in your May issue.—FRANK HEWITT, 6 Kenmare Rd., Wavertree, Liverpool, England.

* * *

Differences of Opinion

Your stories have too many fights, feuds and frame-ups, in which the hero is innocently framed. Try to cut down on that stuff.—STEVEN DAVID, 26 Franklin Ave., Valley Stream, N. Y.

* * *

Just because a skipper is in a natty uniform or the hogger wears greasy overalls, that doesn't change his interest in a woman, whether it be a beanery queen or the Mrs. So if your authors write love stories, highball them through.—WM. F. BARRIE, 282 Hooper St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

* * *

As for the fellow who says "Keep women out of your stories," I'll tell him this: the fastest and clearest Morse I ever heard was sent by a woman station agent on the B. & M. at Orange, Mass. This lady was well in her fiftieth year, too.—LUKE H. KEARNS, 40 Byron St., Springfield, Mass.

* * *

"Worthy Brothers," by E. S. Dellinger, and "Road to Glory," by John Johns, are the two best stories ever published in your magazine.

Forney Type Steam Locomotive on the New York Elevated Fifty Years Ago

"Iron Horses" was punk. "Danger Signals" sets the date as the deadline for old-time stories, and we do not care for too many of them. John A. Thompson is good, but let him write stories like "The Judgment Run."—THOMAS L. WILKINSON, 214 Neff Ave., Masontown, Pa.

* * *

In Defense of Electric Lines

In the July issue, Arthur R. Davis, Jeffersonville, O., said electric lines were not real railroads. I deny this. The steam roads can learn many lessons from some of our electric lines. Many of our electrics have made enviable records in speed, efficiency, safety, and volume of traffic. They rightly deserve a place in our magazine, as well as in the history of American railroads. Can anyone advance a reason why they are not "real railroads"?—EARLE R. THOMPSON, 4460 N. Springfield Ave., Chicago.

* * *

I disagree with Mr. Davis's attack on trolley cars. I think the magazine ought to give them a page or two each month while there are still some running.—HAROLD OLSEN, Box 74, Rowland, Pa.

* * *

Give us stories and features on trolley and subway lines, pictures of trolley cars, etc.—M. FAY BUSTIN, Box 63, Waltham, Mass.

* * *

I want to go on record as stating that within 50 years steam railroading will be seen only in the museums. Evidently Arthur R. Davis has never railroaded on electric lines nor been around them very much, or he wouldn't have said what he did.

I have worked on both steam and electric roads, and there is more excitement in one hour of "juice" than in a whole day of steam. Right now I am a towerman on the Chicago Elevated. In the course of 24 hours we handle a total of 1,800 of our own trains, plus 288 trains of "foreign" roads, plus yard work such as making up trains, cutting and adding of cars on through trains, etc.

During the rush hours we handle from four to six trains a minute—and only one man in the tower to take care of this work, although one false move might mean loss of many lives and destruction of property. The matter of a few seconds means loss of time and delays that bring an avalanche of complaints from rush-hour passengers.

If Mr. Davis would like to view some high-class railroading, let him come to the Chicago "el," to which some of the best steam railroaders have come and have quit after a day or two, saying it was too fast for them. Let's set aside space in RAILROAD STORIES where some of the exciting experiences of the electric rails may be threshed out and stories swapped.

By the way, I work with F. E. Smith, whose letter appeared in July.—GEORGE FRANKLIN, 122 S. Adams St., Westmont, Ill.

* * *

Answering F. E. Smith

In the July issue F. E. Smith, of Niles Center, Ill., wanted to know if we could match for speed train No. 432 of the Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee, which averages 60 miles an hour for 74 miles. How many cars are usually on this train? Regardless of that, the "Twentieth Century Limited" covers the 133 miles between Elkhart and Toledo in 131

minutes—which, with a solid steel train of fifteen cars or more, is merely 61 miles an hour!

The Century should merit more attention now, with its 18-hour schedule. I am wondering if it isn't faster than the "Cheltenham Flyer" over in England, which you mentioned as being the world's fastest train. Of course, its average for the whole trip is somewhat lower, being 53.4, but taking a comparative distance I don't know of any train that is faster.

Anthony D. Chase, of Gary, Ind., challenged us to beat his incident concerning Santa Fe engine No. 3719, which moved 21 heavy steel passenger cars (also the engine of the first train) for about five miles.

In a report given out by the New York Central shortly after it had conducted exhaustive tests on the Hudson type 5200 class, one of these engines maintained the then current 20-hour schedule, New York to Chicago, all the way with 22 steel cars. I think all were Pullman. The average speed was approximately 50 miles an hour. These engines are furnished with huge tenders carrying 24 tons of coal and 12,000 gallons of water. —JOHN H. MOULTON, 10 Williams St., Dedham, Mass.

* * *

Here's another reply to F. E. Smith: Canadian Pacific's train No. 19—the "Canadian," Montreal-Toronto-Chicago flyer, does the 124 miles between Montreal West, Que., and Smith's Falls, Ont., in 108 minutes—68.9 m. p. h. for 124 miles. That's real speed! Eastbound the same time is made—winter and summer. This is the fastest run on the American Continent!—S. A. STEPHENS, JR., 806 Dominion Sq. Bldg., Montreal, Canada.

* * *

A Combination Hard to Beat

The C. & N. W. Sioux City Division has a mileage total of but 445 miles, all single track, but in order to operate a train on that stretch a man must pass the rule book examination of four railroads: the U. P., the I. C., the C., St. P., M. & O. and the C. & N. W.

Trainmen on that division have the current time-tables of the U. P., the I. C., the Western and Nebraska divisions of the C., St. P., M. & O., and the C. &. N. W. time-tables for the Dakota, West Iowa, North Iowa, Eastern and Sioux City divisions—nine in all—as their runs lap over on these different divisions and districts.

The "Soo City" division crews of the C. & N. W. operate trains in automatic train control, upper quadrant, lower quadrant and banjo type automatic signals, as well as colored light signals. They also operate over some doubletrack territory, while on the C. & N. W. they run on the left hand track, and on the U. P. they use the right hand track.

They run in manual block and time space territory at various points. The power used by this division is both coal and oil-burning steam engines, also gas-electric motorcars.

The train service organizations of this division also are called upon to equalize inter-divisional mileage with four other seniority districts. Can any reader beat this combination from so small a division?

I might add that at present we have but 7 passenger and 14 freight assignments for conductors on this seniority district.—RAY S. LONG, Chairman, C. & N. W. Local Committee of Adjustment, O. R. C. of America, Division No. 232, Sioux City, Iowa.

* * *

In your July issue, C. W. Gross, Bryan, O., said he believed the N. Y. C. Toledo Division was the largest division under one superintendent. This is a mere trifle compared with the very long Dakota Division of the Great Northern which is 1,708.75 miles, besides the Farmers' Grain & Shipping Co., which runs from Devil's Lake to Hansboro, 66 miles. R. A. McCandless is superintendent.—MATT SIMON, Devil's Lake, N. D.

* * *

Old Engines Still in Use

A reader asked what happened to the rolling stock of the old Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Ry. The July, 1932, issue of *The Earth Mover* contained a good picture of one of those old-time 40-ton Shay locomotives switching cars at a gravel plant in the construction of the Hoover Dam at Las Vegas, Nev.—R. F. JORDAN, Milwaukee Athletic Club, Milwaukee, Wis.

* * *

Mineral Range 161, 0-6-0, is here in Houghton, boarded up. It was working last year, though, but now an F-1 is used here in yard service. Mineral Range 404—a little 2-6-0 jack (class D-2)—is working here five days a week in freight service. It runs three of those days between Houghton, Calumet and Lake Linden. The other two it goes to Keweenaw Bay and thence over the Mineral Range branch toward Riddle Jct.—DAVID G. HARRIS, 129 Dacotah St., Houghton, Mich.

* * *

Double-Gage Railroading

I noticed in the August RAILROAD STORIES some talk about how a narrow-gage engine used to couple up to standard equipment. I never gave the problem much thought, but recently I saw how one road did it.

The East Tennessee & Western N. Carolina has the double gage for about 10 miles out of Johnson City, Tenn. In August, 1931, their only standard-gage engine (an old N. & W. 2-8-0, No. 828) practically died a natural death and the little narrow-gage engines now handle all the traffic. The shank of the couplings on the engine bumper and tender have two joints in them which allow the head to be swung off the center line of the

engine and in line with the coupling of the standard car. The stunt works fine, but the master mechanic, Mr. Watson, said it was terrible on the engine frame.

They have a real pretty 0-8-0 shifter built by Alco from plans furnished by the road. The Baldwin Works wouldn't touch her because they said she was top heavy and would probably turn over when pulling a heavy load around mountain curves. So far she hasn't turned over, but she has broken her left frame three times. To see her nose into a line of standard cars and then walk off with them gives you a real thrill.—H. T. CRITTENDEN, 909 E. 26th St., Norfolk, Va.

* * *

Letters from Our Authors

W. S. McCullough, of Fond du Lac, Wis., wanted to know the date of the Rio, Wis., wreck on the C., M. St. P. & P. Ry. This wreck occurred Oct. 6, 1886, at 12.31 A.M. I was brakeman on the La Crosse Division of the Milwaukee Road at the time and helped to clear away the wreckage.—W. H. SHAFER, Author of "Racing a Tornado," 400 Carr St., La Crosse, Wis.

* * *

Bennett Foster sure can tell a yarn the way I like to hear one. I got a big kick out of his "Railroadin' Fool."—C. A. ROACH, "Silent Slim," 269 Market St., Portland, Ore.

* * *

In your August issue, Fred J. Pocius called E. S. Dellinger the "Zane Grey" of railroad stories. While I admit that Dellinger is good, I'd like to call attention to our "O. Henry"—Griff Crawford. His "Blue Flag" packs a wallop, and I don't mean perhaps.—L. K. DAVIS, Ex-dispatcher, Box 575, Ajo, Ariz.

* * *

He Recalls the Canyon War

"Canyon War," by Earle Davis, in your August issue is immense. My father was a knight of the rail for about fifty years; just retired from active service on the Great Northern. He was in Colorado in 1880 when the 'boes used to tell about hiring out at $3 per day (rifle furnished) with orders to "shoot any man you see across the canyon." A laborer's pay was $2.25 a day. They could get all the men they wanted at that price.

My favorite railroad poems are "Over the Line with Dad" and "Will the Lights Be White?"—"WOODY," El Paso, Texas.

In the Maple Leaf Dominion

Recently I took a picture of an interesting old Climax logger in British Columbia. This lumber company has been shut down for about 10 years and this old girl is all that remains of the whole firm. She was built in Corby, Pa., and rebuilt in Atlanta, Ga., by the Atlanta Car & Foundry Co.—M. A. MUTZ, 8th St. & 3rd Ave. S., Lethbridge, Alta.

* * *

My dear father, E. H. Pangborn, a pioneer railroader with 55 years' service, died at his home

An Old-Time Abandoned Logging Engine in British Columbia *Photo by M. A. Mutz*

in Rockland, Ont., a few weeks after you published Earle Davis's article about our family, "Canada's First Railway." Eight years ago I was a night hostler on the S. P. at Colton, Calif., where my uncle, Engineer E. W. J. Pangborn, is located. Then I came East and am now electrical foreman in a local industry.—E. A. PANGBORN, 106 Fifth Ave., Niagara Falls, Ont.

* * *

My brother's girl friend is related to the famous Pangborn family, so when he saw my June RAILROAD STORIES with the feature on "Canada's First Railway," he quickly went out and got a copy for himself.—WM. J. CHURCH, Stamford, Ont.

* * *

May I correct Bill Blair's letter in your July issue? The Victoria & Sidney R. R. was discontinued in 1919 and the line torn up, save for about 2 miles, which the C. N. R. now uses as a spur from the Victoria-Patricia Bay Line into Sidney. This information is authentic, as I was living beside the track when the line was being torn up. Should any readers desire information about Vancouver Island, I'll gladly give it to them.—KEN MACDONALD, 305 St. James St., Victoria, B. C.

* * *

Information Wanted

Does anyone remember when the Santa Fe was thinking of running a line straight west to Pueblo? If so, did they ever hear of Rudolph Meyers? If not, will tell you. When he heard of it, he moved his family to Western Kansas and tried to get the grading contract. The idea fell through, but Meyers continued to think that sooner or later the road would go through, so he started grading. How many miles he graded I do not know, but it was a good many. Now as you ride along on the Mo. P., you can see evidences of the work. Incidentally, his wife and family left him and he went partly crazy, but finally went back to Valley Falls, Kan., to return to farming. If anyone knows details, will they please write to me?—H. M. BAKER, R. F. D. No. 1, care of Geo. F. Bigham, Muncie, Kan.

* * *

Can any reader give me information on the new upper Pullman berth with a stairway leading to it? Will Pullman trains use this novel berth? Do any railroads use this invention already? —HERMAN FREDERICKS, 1162 N. Hancock St., Philadelphia, Pa.

* * *

Where could I get railroad trademarks in colors to add to my collection?—LEON F. DENIS, Box 144, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

I want to know why such a road as the D. & R. G. W. doesn't use track welders, as the C., B. & Q. has found it very profitable to weld rails, frogs and switch points. Would like to hear from welders on other roads.—C. R. FROST, care of C., B. & Q. Welders, St. Joseph, Mo.

* * *

The world's longest continuous straight track is on the Trans-Australian Railway, but is there any record of the longest continuous curved track? On the south shore of Lake Pontchartrain, in Louisiana, the Southern Railway main line curves continuously for 8.6 miles. Is there any longer stretch on record?—H. WILSON ARNOLD, Box 355, Covington, La.

* * *

Does any other road handle as many engines or more than the B. & M. handles at its Boston terminal roundhouse? The B. & M. now handles M. C., C. P., C. V., C. N. and New Haven power.

A reader from Winchester, Mass., asked for information on Sullivan County & Vermont Valley locomotives. Those that have not been scrapped are now working on the B. & M., and are numbered 3240 to 3244. The two Pacifics, Nos. 25 and 26, are still going and are numbered in the P-2 class 3600. If the reader is interested in finding out just where each one of those engines is, he can get in touch with me.

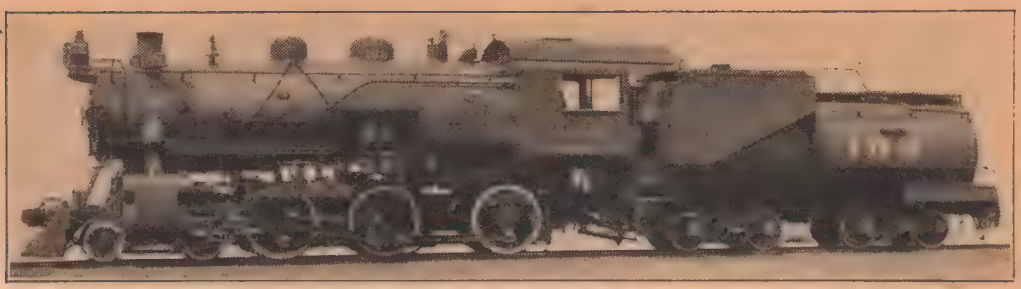
Am working for the B. & M. Billerica Shops, where there are about 125 locomotives for scrap-shop and storage. Will do what I can to help anyone as to snapshots, information, etc.—WARREN A. HALLETT, Box 77, Beacon Street, Wilmington, Mass.

* * *

What Would You Do?

Suppose you are an engineer on a fast freight going down grade at 40 m. p. h. Just as you round the curve there is a passenger train loaded down, standing dead still. The passenger failed to send out a flagman. You can jump out to save your own neck, or stay with your engine and try your best to stop it, although you know it is humanly impossible. What would you do? —ROBERT WEIR, R. D. 2, Schenerus, N. Y.

For the best reply to Mr. Weir's letter received at 280 Broadway, New York City, before Nov. 1, 1932, we will give one year's subscription to RAILROAD STORIES. Our editorial staff will act as judges. The main purpose is to stir up interesting discussion. Who will suggest a problem for our next informal contest? Next month we will print the prize-winning letter on the washout question.



A Powerful Northwestern Pacific Ten-wheeler, Built by Baldwin in 1922

International Engine Picture Club

SINCE we started giving away International Engine Picture Club buttons more than a thousand members have written in for them. We still have a supply on hand. To get one simply fill out the Reader's Choice coupon in the back of the book; send it and a self-addressed envelope (or a three-cent stamp if you live in Canada or any foreign country) and the pin will be mailed to you at once.

This emblem will identify you as a recognized engine picture collector or railroad photographer anywhere.

Here is this month's list of abandonments:

The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific is abandoning its line from Hopkins to Deephaven, Minn., 7 miles; Greenwich & Johnsonville its line from Johnsonville to Greenwich, N. Y., 14 miles; L&N proposes to abandon its branch line from Cliffside to Irvine, Ky., 77 miles, as does the East Kentucky Southern its entire line from Grayson to Webbville, Ky., 13 miles.

Southern, from Moscow to Somerville, Tenn., 13 miles; Minneapolis & Rainy River from Deer River to Craig, Minn., 43 miles, together with a 20 mile branch. New York Central and Michigan Central, St. Clair to Richmond, Mich., 15 miles.

Chicago & North Western, Mattoon to Mattoon Jct., Wis., 9 miles. Oregon-Washington, Bello, Wash., to Amwaco, Idaho, 14 miles. Pennsylvania, 3 miles of the WNY&P into Carmona, Pa. Seaboard Air Line from Archer to Cedar Key, Fla., 41 miles.

One of our foreign members, Alf. Solomons, 77a Eighth Ave., Bez. Valley, Johannesburg, So. Africa, writes in to say that he is too overwhelmed with queries and correspondence to cope with requests about snapshots for some time. Evidently members are interested in foreign pikes.

Readers who collect, buy, sell, exchange or make pictures of locomotives, trains, etc., are listed here as members of the International Engine Picture Club. There are no fees and no dues. Address Engine Picture Editor, RAILROAD STORIES, 280 Broadway, New York City. Names are published in good faith, without guarantee.

LOCOMOTIVE PHOTOGRAPH CO., Box 6354, W. Market St. Station, Philadelphia, Pa., announces special prices on following sets of Milwaukee Road photos, size 2½x7½, types 0-6-0, 4-6-0, 4-6-4, 4-8-4, 2-8-2, 4-4-2 and 4-4-4-4 electric—all 7 for $1.00.

RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHS, 5 Appian Way, Allston, Mass., has new lists of photos, also new catalog, including latest lists, 25c each.

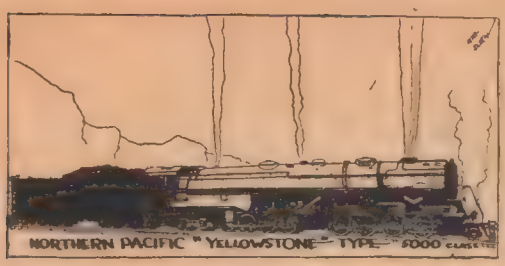
D. L. JOSLYN, 2164 Castro Way, Sacramento, Calif., has unique collection of Central Pacific and Southern Pacific photos. 3¼ x 5½ at 15c. each. Photo of Central Pacific No. 149, "The Black Fox," published by us last month, at 15c. Also many modern S. P. photos. Send for list.

D. A. SOMERVILLE, 79 West Essex Ave., Lansdowne, Pa., has new lot of old-time photos from 1860 to 1881, size 5 x 7, at 25c. each. Will send sample print with list to anyone for 15c. Group includes D&RG, CB&Q, B&M, C&A, PB&W, etc.; many narrow gage.

W. H. MURRAY, Vallejo, Calif., interested in all kinds of motive power.

T. FOGARTY, 190 Rocklyn Ave., Lynbrook, L. I., N. Y., will send 2½ x 4¼ print of Pennsy or B&O Pacific type to anyone sending print of other U. S. or Canadian engines.

F. J. MEGARO, 477 Walnut St., North Adams, Mass.



MIKE DUNCAN, Retsil, Wash., will draw any locomotive or train from snap or photos for $1.00; size 14 x 11.

P. R. PATTERSON, 2573 Cabot, Detroit, Mich., has added more than a hundred new pictures to his narrow gage collection; specializes in narrow lines such as Ohio River & Western, Waynesburg & Washington, East Broad Top, Tionesta Valley, Valley River, D&RGW, C&S, Unitah, Nevada Central, Nevada County, Pacific Coast, Sumpter Valley, etc. Has just returned from a western trip on which he got many rare photos. Will exchange for narrow gage pictures only.

W. J. CARLYLE, 517 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass., has large sized photos of B&M, B&A, New Haven, $1.00 a dozen postpaid.

J. C. BEAN, JR., 22 Hanover St., Asheville, N. C.

J. R. WILMOT, 41 Tacoma St., Asheville, N. C., has 2¼ x 3¼ photos of Southern roads to exchange for any roads, American or foreign.

B. D. FALES, 1209 E Street, Silver Springs, Md., has good clear postcard size photos of all roads around Washington, D. C., at 7c. each; will send free photo of No. 5510 pulling B&O CAPITOL LIMITED to first 100 people sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

P. V. SCOTT, Route No. 1, Salem, Va., has pamphlets with names of all railways and systems. 25c. each; silver or 1c. stamps.

RAY PEARSON, 85 Lord St., Richmond E-1, Victoria, Australia.

B. C. ROUNDS, Farmington, Me., has good postcard size photos of snow fighting on Sandy River Line. For sale only. Write.

F. W. HARMAN, 676 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, Calif., has postcard size print of Tonopah & Tidewater station at Rhyolite, Nevada, with history attached, for 10c. each; others for exchange.

E. MAC WRIGHT, Box 3478, Philadelphia, Pa., is in market for engine pictures and negatives.

E. McEVOY, 32 Cedar St., No. Cambridge, Mass., has photos of almost every railroad in U. S.

A. BUDEK, 936 E. 178th St., New York City, wants photos of D&RGW Mallets, NP 5000; also EJ&E and SP&S.

S. DAVID, 26 Franklin Ave., Valley Stream, L. I., N. Y., has photo of Fonda, Johnstown & Gloversville No. 12 at 7c. each or trade.

S. SHEDROW, 1262 Westchester Ave., New York City, interested in modern power of western roads.

JACK ALABAUGH, 111 Grand Ave., Cumberland, Md.

J. M. FESCO, 1547 W. 12th Place, Los Angeles, Calif., has good collection of photos.

F. ESPOSITO, 696 Courtland Ave., New York City, is starting scrap book.

R. WEIR, R. D. No. 2, Schenerus, N. Y., wants all kinds of narrow gage power since 1900, three-foot gage preferred.

H. OLSEN, Box 74, Rowlands, Pa., will pay good price for trolley photos of Jersey Central Traction, Morris County Traction and Staten Island Municipal.

CHAS. HUFFER, JR., Assumption, Ill., wants Spokane Int., D&M, and other small roads. Has IC, Wabash, B&O, C&IM, C&A, NKP, Ill. Term., L&M. Trade only.

F. A. LEDGARD, 21 Cherry St., Sharon Hill, Pa., wants to buy photo of SP Atlantic type, also blueprints for model of Reading Pacific type. Has many 2½ x 4¼ snaps of B&O, Reading, Jersey Central, Pennsy.

K. F. MACDONALD, 305 St. James St., Victoria, B. C., Canada, has small snaps of CNR and Esquimalt & Nanaimo Ry; postcard size of CPR No. 1953 (0-6-6-0); will sell or trade.

BOB NOONAN, 618 S. Market, Springfield, Mo.

H. WILK, Box 365, Smithfield, Pa., has postcard and 2½ x 4¼ snaps of standard railroads and industrial locomotives; send for lists.

R. GOTTSCHALL, 334 Spring St., Reading, Pa., will give good railroad clippings to foreign readers who will write to him.

H. A. CRAIG, Alexander, N. Y., has good photos of New York Central Nos. 962 (4 x 5); 2116, 2112, 177 (2¾ x 3¾); 1612, 498 (2¼ x 3¼); will exchange.

J. F. BYRNE, Greensburg Ave., East McKeesport, Pa., wishes to exchange postcard size only; wants C&IM, Virginian, C&EI; has all Pennsy and B&O types; send list.

H. FRANK, 1954 Bissell St., Chicago, Ill., wants photo of C&O 2-10-4 type.

F. G. HOWARTH, 234 Atlantic Ave., Providence, R. I., collects old timetables, western roads preferred. Wants GN passenger folder of 1922 or 1923; also New Haven of 1925; will pay fair price plus postage.

A. E. MILLER, 3448-33rd Ave. South, Minneapolis, Minn., will pay 50c. each for old locomotive classifications of C&NW, CStPM&O; will also pay 25c. each for locomotive rosters of these roads and predecessors.

L. DISTEL, P. O. Box 133, Lansing, Mich., will furnish pictures of NYC, MC, GTW, PM at 15c. or will trade; wants to hear from other members about best way of developing a collection.

L. A. BROOMFIELD, 6536 Lambert St., Philadelphia, Pa.

L. ORSBERN, 2403 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa, has postcards at 5c. each plus postage of CMSt.P&P, DMURR, IC, RI, CB&Q, CGW, M&St.L, C&NW, DM&CI, Ft.DDM&S, WCF&N. Also negatives at 25c. each of RI, DMURR, DM&GI, Ft.DDM&S.

G. C. SHELLMAN, 25 Bartlett St., Springfield, Mass., has April, 1932 issue of BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVES for sale; also 4 x 2¾ of B&A Nos. 32, 600 class, 1400 class; B&M, Nos. 417, 2107, 3670, 36, 73; New Haven 1321, 1369, 3420, also electrics—10c. each. Wants to buy July, 1931, BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVES and RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINES from 1916.

W. E. MOORE, 3670-a Shaw, St. Louis, Mo., has many old Baldwin photos; wants to trade for newer Baldwin and Alco photos; especially interested in MoP; write.

R. B. KIRBY, 5137½ Clinton St., Los Angeles, Calif., interested in small and obsolete roads.

F. STOUT, 25 Warren St., Homer, N. Y

C. S. BRIGGS, Spencer, Mass., wants photos of Central Vermont power and trains; also railroad wrecks; also RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE before 1919.

W. PRIWER, 1606 Lagonda Ave., Springfield, O., wants photos of T&OC and Hocking Valley; send list.

A. FITZPATRICK, 1402 S. Highland Ave., Baltimore, Md.

W. J. FOLEY, 230 Marlboro St., E. Greenwich, R. I., wants to exchange only; has small snaps of GTW, IC, Soo, C&NW, C&A, New Haven, etc. Write.

E. F. DUNLAP, 5203 Lake Park Ave., Chicago, Ill., has old Illinois Central Magazines to trade for old RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINES.

R. V. MEHLENBECK, 128 W. Arcadia Ave., Peoria, Ill., will trade or sell snaps of steam or electric railroads, interurbans and city street cars. Write for list and sample.

L. E. STOCKTON, 1121 S. 60th St., Tacoma, Wash., is starting book of insignia.

B. H. BAAKE, JR., R. F. D., Fullerton, Md., wants old or obsolete transportation tokens of street cars, bus lines, horse cars or toll bridges; especially in Marquette, Mich., and Lexington, Ky.

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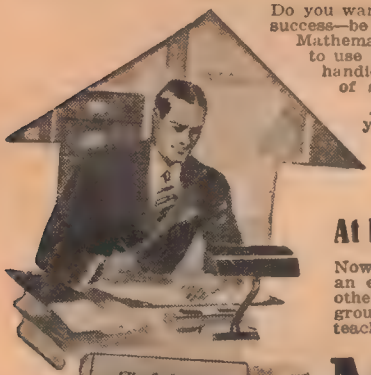

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No cover reproductions available except those listed here. The supply of old ones is rapidly being exhausted. Check the ones you want and send a 2c stamp for each. The first calls for a 3c stamp.

....Railroading in the Jungle (Oct.,'32)
....Jesse James (Sept., '32)
....Colorado Canyon War (Aug., '32)
....Boomers' Paradise (July, '32)
....Head On! (June, '32)
....Hobo, You Can't Ride (May, '32)
....Thirty! (Feb., '32)
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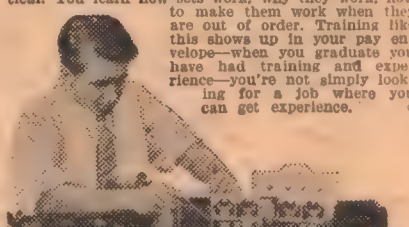

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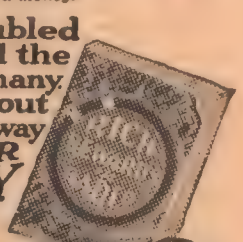

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